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FOLK ROOTS AND MODERN ANXIETIES: THE INTELLECTUAL ARTICULATION OF THE NATION IN *FIN-DE-SIÈCLE* BULGARIA AND UKRAINE

By

Vessela Balinska-Ourdeva ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies

Edmonton, Alberta
Spring 2003

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Degree: Doctor of Philosophy

Year this Degree is Granted: 2003

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Ourdeva.

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April 15, 2003

A training in words leads to a fresh discovery of reality … (or more precisely) a rediscovery.

Yukio Mishima

University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled *Folk Roots and Modern Anxieties: The Intellectual Articulation of the Nation in fin-de-siècle Bulgaria and Ukraine* submitted by Vessela Balinska-Ourdeva in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy.

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На мајка и татко

For my mom and dad

ABSTRACT

This study explores from an interdisciplinary point of view the attitudes of Ukrainian and Bulgarian modernists toward their respective local traditions. More specifically, it focuses on the efforts of the modernist Ukrainian and Bulgarian artistic intelligentsia to critically assess, re-invent, and appropriate available indigenous resources in order to make them meaningful in the present as part of modern public high culture. Such practices appear to have been characteristic for the nation building initiatives in 'marginalized,' peripheral societies. My study examines the Ukrainian and Bulgarian redactions of the phenomenon by relying on an eclectic theoretical framework that combines ideas deriving from sociology (Pierre Bourdieu), political science and social psychology (John Hutchinson, Carolyne Vogler), postcolonial literary theory (Gregory Jusdanis) and anthropology (Michael Herzfeld, Roger J. Foster and others).

The historical and socio-political developments in Ukraine and Bulgaria suggest that—at the turn of the twentieth century—the local modernist intelligentsia reacted to a particular crystallization of ethnic identity, which naturalized the peasants as the embodiment of Ukrainianness and Bulgarianness respectively. In principle, they disagreed with the adoption of such a demotic model for national identification because it inadequately promoted the institution of a modern, highly intellectual and sophisticated national culture. In both societies, therefore, Modernism developed in opposition to other approaches to

nation formation and nation building. In both localities it evolved as a public moral position that allowed the creative intelligentsia to criticize the state and construe itself as an alternative force of social change and innovation.

This study proposes that Ukrainian and Bulgarian modernists engaged in a form of cultural nationalism which—through the implementation of the ideas of political liberalism, individualism, and pure aesthetics—pursued the Europeanization and Westernization of local cultural traditions. Simultaneously, they also sought to elevate the prestige and symbolical value of modern Ukrainian and Bulgarian national culture. In short, my study proposes and defends the idea that Ukrainian and Bulgarian Modernisms were not exclusively aesthetic movements, but expressions of specific, locally generated ideologies of subversion and resistance that pursued the cultural re-invigoration and political transformation of the respective national societies.

PREFACE

When the idea for this study was originally conceived, the relationship between vernacular cultures and Modernism seemed a fascinating and challenging intellectual topic. For me, it opened opportunities for critical revising of outdated and reductive, primarily linguistic mainstream approaches to Modernism such as New Criticism, Structuralism, Semiotics, and Hermeneutics, all of which seek to discover the 'transcendental truth,' beauty or ethics embedded in experimental literary pieces (Melaney 2001, 17; 24-25; 100-101). This 'truth' was considered immanent to the ground-breaking, original form created by the artist inasmuch as literary scholars tended to pay little attention to the conditions under which the production, consumption and evaluation of modernist pieces occurred. The practice of 'close reading,' accordingly, offered an opportunity to make authoritative statements regarding the uniqueness of the artistic endeavor and to affirm the singular significance of authors and works as originators of a new aesthetic paradigm (Aronowitz 1994, 44-96). I saw the problem as an intellectual challenge, because of the largely ignored question of the political uses and implications of modernist intellectual practices. I found the evolution and utilization of the 'art for art's sake' aesthetic ideology to be particularly interesting in locations where Modernism was considered to be an intellectual project, 'imported' from the West, which the local intelligentsia successfully or unsuccessfully 'imitated' and 'managed to reproduce.'

Today, the increasing interest in cultural politics and the growing awareness of the various uses of literature for the enforcement of particular social orders and power relations – especially in light of the ample theorizations concerning the central role of national literatures in the creation of the nation and the promotion of the nation-state – make the topic less formidable. Although it does not attempt to elaborate a decisively revisionist theory, my proposed study seeks to explore the complex historical and social circumstances that conditioned the evolution of modernist critical attitudes and cultural practices in two 'marginal' geopolitical locations, namely Bulgaria and Ukraine. Thus, the central theoretical assumption of this study is the idea that the Bulgarian and Ukrainian literary Modernisms were cultural-political projects that aimed at the creation of national citizens and articulated, through the 'art for art's sake' aesthetics a very distinctive nationalist program for cultural revival and nation-formation. Ultimately, this program sought the congruence of the political and the cultural as a way to mitigate the controversial, and often conflicting, experience of nationality as a modern form of social bonding and identification. Therefore, the study attempts to unravel the tensions involved in the 'construction' of high national culture by focusing on a single aspect of the nation-building process. That is, to put it succinctly, the attempt to appropriate available indigenous resources (i.e., the 'pre-existing' traditions of vernacular culture) in order to make them meaningful in the present as part of the modern public 'high' culture. This seems to be characteristic for the nation-building initiatives in 'marginalized,' peripheral societies.

Specifically, I am interested in explicating the paradoxical logic of modernist controversial engagement with folk culture as a resource for identity formation and articulation. My study is concerned above all with the exploration of Bulgarian and Ukrainian modernist theoretical and critical production. It refrains from offering extensive literary analyses of individual modernist works and, instead, looks at private (letters and diaries) and public (articles, reviews, etc.) expressions of modernist attitudes toward local vernacular traditions in order to trace the similarities and differences in the intellectual articulation of these two "small nations" (Hroch 2000). My choice is justified by the desire to investigate the processes of systematic "allocation and contest for resources" in the purposeful intellectual promulgation of the nation in public discourse (Verdery in Kennedy and Sunny 1999, 20).

In Bulgarian and Ukrainian turn-of-the-century society, a common feature appears to be the tension between the inherited vernacular cultural production and modern written literature as two code-systems that defined the manner of collective self-expression and supplied means to signify the nation through the public discourse of the 'common' culture. In other words, my study is concerned with the frictions between the traditional and the modern, the native and the foreign, the 'high' and the 'low' (popular) in the constitution of Bulgarian and Ukrainian national culture, which seem to be particularly significant for the formation and cultural-political modernization of 'small / marginal nations.'

This study proposes an alternative reading of the modernist project and practices – an attempt that tries, on the one hand, to transcend the current debate between primordialists, modernists, and perenialists in the theorization of the nation (cf. James 1996). On the other hand, the study challenges stereotypical approaches to Bulgarian and Ukrainian Modernism that render these movements as inadequate and deviant reproductions of Western Modernism(s). As Ilnytzkyj has pointed out, it is a commonplace in Ukrainian scholarship to assert that because of its "strong patriotic strain," Ukrainian Modernism has "normally been interpreted as failing," demonstrating "the inability of Ukrainian literature to shed completely its populist heritage, or as the inevitable response of poets to the inevitable political position of Ukraine" (1991: 261-262). Although Bulgarian Modernism was rarely assessed from this position, its conceptualization suffers similar prejudices.

In this context, one immediate purpose of my work is to open a space for the critical re-evaluation of the Bulgarian and Ukrainian modernist projects in light of the socio-historical circumstances that propelled the modernization of these 'peripheral' locations. In addition, this work explores the modernist ideological manipulation of the established vernacular traditions as resources for the intellectual construction and articulation of the nation. Thus, the study will argue three main points. First, Modernism in Bulgaria and Ukraine was a cultural-political rather than exclusively aesthetic movement. In these two locations, it evolved as a form of cultural nationalism that pursued the modernization and moral resurrection of the respective communities through their Europeanization and Westernization. Respectively, in both cultural contexts the modernist ideology that the local intellectuals contrived differed from the mainstream European Modernisms in its purposes and general orientation (the patriotic strain to which Ilnytzkyj alludes) because it was contingent on the specific experience of nationality occasioned by the local socio-historical, and political conditions of the time. Second, the central concern of these two movements was the articulation of alternative versions of Bulgarian and Ukrainian identity. Such versions were often developed in opposition to the models of self-representation officially promoted by the state. As a rule, they reflected the modern definition of social collectivity thereby endorsing the supremacy of personal autonomy and freedom of choice in a way that exposed the 'fluidity' and 'constructed-ness' of identity as embodied in the controversial experience of nationality, "lived as a series of remarkable contradictions" (James 1996, xi). Third, the modernist project in both localities focused on the articulation of the basic parameters of civil society, pushing for the nation's further democratization and liberalization. The modernist projects in both localities I believe were successful with respect to the formulation and endorsement of a positive national image by means of creating a high national culture that attempted to unite the ethnic and the civic principles of national self-determination. This high national culture had a long-lasting effect because it produced a *habitus* that essentially maintained the prestige and social value of the local intellectuals as a powerful and progressive social force that relentlessly opposed society's backwardness, continuously introducing change and social innovations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Encouragement, support, and invaluable help from many people made the realization of this project possible. I hope I do not miss someone's name.

First, I want to thank my husband and my son for their unconditional love and patience. Their moral support helped me to get through the frustrations of a long, and sometimes tedious process of writing and editing, and to persist through countless hours of missed opportunities for family fun. Next, I want to thank my mother, who assiduously researched and photocopied materials for me at the Bulgarian National Library. My brother made sure that I received those promptly, and for this, I thank him.

Then, I thank Dr. Ilnytzkyj and Dr. Pylypiuk for having me as their graduate student and encouraging me to complete this project. I am grateful for their guidance, intellectual stimulation, and continuous support in revising and refining both the ideas and their expression at various stages of my work. Specifically, I want to thank Dr. Ilnytzkyj for his critical suggestions and comments on the earlier drafts. The thesis took shape as a result of numerous formal and informal conversations with him. Also, I want to thank him for helping me with the translations from Ukrainian into English. Dr. Pylypiuk's meticulous proofreading and thought-provoking critical notes gave this study its final form.

Lastly, my colleagues and friends, Mira Green, Allan Jack, Terry Colp, and Marie Pawluk, who read different sections of the manuscript at different times, deserve thanks for helping me attain the fluency of a native speaker of English. I also thank Dr. Ingrid Johnston for her moral and intellectual support, and above all, for providing me with much needed respite at the regular meetings of our research group on multicultural literature, which she invited me to join two years ago.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

n. d. – Not dated

PMLA – Publications of the Modern Languages Association of America

NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS

All translations from Bulgarian into English are mine, and I bear full responsibility for any misinterpretations and errors. In cases where there is a published translation of works, originally written in Ukrainian or Bulgarian language, I cite the existing official renditions, providing a note with reference to the source. Dr. Ilnytzkyj helped me to render Ukrainian texts that have no published English translations. Nevertheless, even in those instances I still bear the full responsibility for any misinterpretations and erroneous renditions.

1. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: LOCATING THE PROBLEM

> We are now at the threshold of a new age for the study of all modernist literature [...] there is no richer time to be a modernist teacher and scholar [...] and many of the riches are yet to be found in the untapped archives and in the unexamined histories of modernist texts.
>
> R. Schuchard[1]

1.1. Theorizing the Relationship of Modernism *and Local Tradition: Revisiting Modernism*

The term 'Modernism,' although widely used, is problematic. Its meaning is vague and strongly dependent on the scholarly discourse within which it is constructed. In literary studies alone, there are enough contradictory definitions to make 'Modernism' an ambiguous and somewhat useless concept. Thus, it is obligatory, while going through what other scholars have written about the meaning of the term, to try, at least in principle, to point out the set of features I hold to be part of the conceptual 'schema' of Modernism.

Let me begin the examination of what – in my view – appears to be a standard approach in western conceptualizations of Modernism with a reference to Astradur Eysteinsson's comment that " 'Modernism' signals a dialectical opposition to what is not functionally 'modern,' namely 'tradition' " (1990, 8). In the same line of thought, another comment, one made by folklorists, is worth mentioning. In the introductory article to the special issue of *Western Folklore* featuring the new perspectives in contemporary folkloristics, Charles Briggs and

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[1] Cited in Ian Wilson, Warren Gould and Warren Cherniak, eds., *Modernist Writers and the Market Place* (London: Macmillian Press, 1996) xviii.

Amy Shuman opine that folklore is "a discipline [that] is concerned with the study of traditional, vernacular, and local cultural productions," and as such was "*created as the silent Other of modernism*" (1993, 109).

Today, it appears to me, the cleavage between Modernism and tradition is not so sharp. As Eysteinsson has pointed out, Modernism at present is just another contested tradition, one of the many we have recognized as part of our most recent art and literary history. I also agree with this scholar when he suggests that, "the anti-traditional aspects of modernism and their implications were played down at an early stage by writers and critics seeking an aesthetic order in which to ground a modern poetics" (1990, 8). Let me also introduce the 'post-modernist' anthropological perspective of Arjun Appadurai, who claims that,

> [o]ne of the most problematic legacies of grand Western social science (Auguste Comte, Karl Marx, [...] Emile Durkheim) is that it has steadily reinforced the sense of some single moment – call it the modern moment – that by its appearance creates a dramatic and unprecedented break between past and present. Reincarnated as the break between tradition and modernity and typologized as the difference between ostensibly traditional and modern societies, this view has been shown repeatedly to distort the meanings of change and the politics of pastness (1997, 3).

In this light, the characterization of Modernism as the *reverse* of traditions fails to provide a solid frame of reference to support a reading of the term's meaning that would be useful for the purposes of this study. Even though I agree in principle with the interpretation of Modernism as the *Other* of tradition, I also find it compulsory to broaden modernism's definition by attempting to see it as a form of cultural practice that did not *oppose* tradition, but in fact strove to revise, modernize and re-invent traditionalized modes of aesthetic signification in order to make these suitable for the expression of modern aesthetic sensibilities and cultural dispositions. Thus, regarding the relationship of Modernism and tradition, I tend to espouse Jusdanis' view (1991): this scholar argues that "the split between tradition and modernity has been a function of the modernization project, which assumes that modern societies have completely eradicated traditional elements and, conversely, that traditional societies have no modern features"

(Jusdanis 1991, xiii). According to him, the two concepts are dialectically related and continuous rather than radically opposed and separated, proposing therefore, a more sophisticated and more plausible model of their interaction.

In the view of another author concerned with defining the concept of Modernism from a philosophical perspective, the term designates "an aesthetic movement inside modernity, yet one that sees itself as counteracting certain negative aspects of modernity – the inability, for example, to yield a contented and equitable society, despite its promises, or fully to account for the aesthetic experience as a guide to and authorization of value, as romanticism had been able to do" (Berman 1994, viii). As this critic asserts, the fundamental presumption of Modernism is the romantic belief in the "pre-eminence of art as affording a verifiable access to truth" (Berman 1994, viii). In his view, "modernism incorporates notions of spirit, genius, self-expression, and inspiration as instruments of world change" while at the same time it produces critical formalism "in a more comfortably empiricist guise" (1994, 23).

According to Berman, "by the end of the nineteenth century, modernism has emerged to impede or prevent modernity from proceeding along the path dictated solely by empiricist principles" (1994, 25). This intellectual movement was concerned with defining "values, not facts." To deal with facts and technology was a task left for scientists to tackle. In this manner, Berman writes, "the modernists claim a separate territory, the *aesthetic-emotional leadership* necessary to give value to science" (1994, 25; italics mine).

More or less explicitly articulated, the idea that modernism is an essential part of the processes of modernization seems to be unanimously accepted in contemporary critical discourses (Neville 1992, Berman 1994, Sarup 1996). European Modernism is viewed as an intellectual movement that challenged the most basic philosophical and epistemological assumptions of nineteenth-century 'bourgeois' society. It, ultimately, questioned the rights and capability of the 'bourgeoisie' to function as cultural leaders. It is commonly held that modernism was primarily an aesthetic project, though one that had far-reaching social and political implications. It was put forward, as Pierre Bourdieu shows us (1995), by a certain type of intellectual who aspired to gain social recognition in the field of cultural production.

These individuals arrived with a wealth of symbolical capital (following Bourdieu's apt formulation) that, presumably, no other social group possessed at the time. Their goal was to assert themselves as "fully fledged members of the world of art," and to acquire a dominant position in it (Bourdieu 1995, 61). The fact that they were rich with symbolical capital served to prove their ability to be cultural leaders, and thus, by means of announcing the right of art to serve no other master but itself, they substantiated their claim to cultural hegemony.

It is important, for the purposes of this research, to distinguish between 'modernizers' and the modernists. In the context of Bulgarian and Ukrainian society, the modernists, though primary, were not the only agents of modernization. However, what was peculiar to their practice as 'modernizers' seems to inform the specificity of the Bulgarian and Ukrainian versions of Modernism. For instance, artists and critics, such as Pencho P. Slaveikov and Dr. Krŭstiu Krŭstev in Bulgaria, or Volodymyr Vynnychenko, Natalia Kobryns'ka and others in Ukraine, were interested in the political as well as economic transformation of their communities. They, although speaking of political and social disengagement, were actively involved in the propagation of modern liberal and democratic ideas. Many of the modernists (especially in Ukraine, which at the time was a colonially dependent territory) were members of political parties that opposed the existing official institutions and actively engaged in the 'creation' of alternative political and social structures. In other words, the strong socio-political orientations of the Bulgarian and Ukrainian modernist movements appear not to be distortions or insufficiencies of the cultural development of these people, but a logical outcome of the peculiarity of historical conditions in which modernization in these two 'marginalized' communities took place.

The aesthetics of 'art for art's sake,' as Bourdieu (1995) points out, was elaborated as an independent ideological position, and expressed in a sophisticated conceptual paradigm that sustained the modernists' aspirations for power. As a strategy, modernists in the West chose to follow the path of renunciation. Their fundamental credo became the principle of complete detachment from social and political activities. They went to extreme in defending their depreciation of things material. The almost ascetic seclusion, and withdrawal from the social reality into the world of beauty, harmony and idealistic musing, which they discovered in their own creative drives, became a matter of moral virtue.

The figure of the modern artist or writer, "[who is] a full-time professional, dedicated to one's work in a total and exclusive manner, indifferent to the exigencies of politics and to the injunctions of morality, and not recognizing any other jurisdiction other than the norms specific to one's art," was legitimized as a new social personality. The new social position was embodied in the modern archetype of the 'starving artist.' Stripped of material possessions and social obligations the modernist artist was invented as an individual who stands beyond the constraints of history, culture, and society. As such, the modernist artists enjoyed high social prestige and found themselves established in the system of social differentiation (Bourdieu 1995, 76-77). The process of creation and empowering of the modern artist was, as Bourdieu writes, "inseparable from the invention of pure aesthetics" and the institutionalization of art as an autonomous and highly respected social activity (1995, 111).

This ideological position, as the eminent French social theorist argues, was the only option available to the modernists, especially if one takes into account the configuration of power relations brought about by the shift towards capitalist economy and industrialization (Bourdieu 1995, 61). He explains that the aesthetic ideology of pure art was not a ready-made position, one "to be taken up, like those founded in the very logic of social functioning, through the social functions they fulfill, or claim to […].” It was, in his view, “a position to be made, devoid of any equivalent in the field of power and which might not or wasn't necessary supposed to exist” (Bourdieu 1995, 76). Its roots are to be found “in the experiences associated with the fact of occupying, at the heart of the [artistic] literary field, a dominated position which is clearly not unconnected with [the] position [of such individuals] in terms of origin, and more precisely, to the dispositions and the economic and cultural capital they have inherited from it” (Bourdieu 1995, 74).

If seen from this perspective, European Modernism then, seems to be best conceived of as an ideology of subversion. It evolved because of the changes and historical disruptions taking place since the second half of the nineteenth century and, undoubtedly, was a major consequence of the spread of modernity (Eysteinsson 1990, 6). According to Berman, the major characteristic of modernist ideology was the “discontent with the triumph of modernity through its technology and its international economics.” European modernists “protest[ed] that the cost of economic prosperity has been the homogenization of humanity,” and they strove to “liberate people from economy” and offer them a different ideological perspective, which itself constitutes the policy of aesthetic revolt and negation of ‘normality,’ conventionality and tradition (Berman 1994, 25).[2]

The various channels and means of communication were the primary focus of modernist revolt. This was, as Eysteinsson writes, “where the interruptive practices of modernism appear in their most significant and characteristic forms” (1990, 6). Modernists rebelled against conventional stereotypes of perception, and above all, were concerned to find alternative modes of representation. Because art needed to be recognized as a “social, political and aesthetic corrective” to modernity (Berman 1994, 5), modernists directed their efforts to undermine the unquestionable authority of rational thinking, which, since the times of Enlightenment, provided the basic premise of modern epistemology. In the course of their resistance to 'political' and 'economic' domination, modernists made many transgressions and erased many boundaries, thus, irreversibly changing the very structure of the field of cultural production. A fundamental aspect of the modernist aesthetic enterprise was, as Bourdieu observes, to "be its own market," and evidently, through the institutionalization of such a 'market' social prestige and authority were vested into the activity of modern artists and writers.

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[2] It is widely known that the modernists did not produce “an audience of the requisite magnitude and power, aside from the audience that uses modernism only to adorn its surroundings” (Berman 1994, 25). But their zest for originality and, to a certain degree, their philosophy of cynicism are also what, in my view, remain the driving forces of contemporary post-modernist intellectualism.

Here, I think, two methodological points are of relevance. I try to conceptualize the modernist revolt against tradition and conventionalized forms of representation in relation to the changes occurring in a particular historical, cultural and social environment because of the arrival of 'modernity' there. I espouse the idea that if we were to understand what modernism as a cultural force was, we must look at the specific historical, political, cultural conditions that characterized the social contexts in which the modernization projects were engendered in different places and times. More specifically, we need to explore the transformations in the mindset of the local intellectuals that allowed for the modernist aesthetic practices to evolve, and the ideology of art for art's sake to gain social recognition. In other words, we have to see how Modernism became an international movement by means of its careful instilment, reproduction, and institutionalization in many different localities around the globe.

I see the modernists as a sort of international 'society' of intellectuals who, to a degree, shared a particular critical attitude toward their contemporary socio-economical and cultural environments. This attitude was manifested in their lifestyle, social relations, aesthetic preferences and tastes. Yet, I also recognize the modernists to be historical subjects who were products of very distinct social and cultural 'neighborhoods' (to use Appadurai's formulation)[3] within which they lived and operated, and against which they rebelled. Essentially, this directs us to see modernist literature and artworks as realizations of a concrete social practice, 'globally' known, but with a logic of development and struggle that was historically and culturally dependent on the social circumstances under which it arose.

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[3] Cf. his discussion on the production of locality, and the distinction he makes

A successful break away from the existing traditions meant, as Bourdieu argues, that modernist ideology had to find itself "instituted both in the objective structures of a socially governed universe and in the mental structures of those who inhabit it and who tend by this fact to accept as evident the injunctions inscribed in the immanent logic of its functioning" (1995, 60-61). In this context then, the formal approaches (New Criticism, Formalism, Structuralism, etc.), which tend to neglect the influences of social forces, and focus on the exploration of the aesthetic qualities of modernist works, become merely strategic devices, as Eysteinsson has acknowledged, tied to the "vested professional interests of those whose careers are felt to be dependent upon literature as an autonomous field of study." I fully agree with him that "[b]y securing the autonomy of literature [...] literary criticism is also protecting its vulnerable specificity and justifying its existence as an area of significant cultural inquiry" (Eysteinsson 1990, 77).

To re-invest the historical perspective into the study of modernist art means also that the notion of tradition becomes a very specific category, one that I conceptualize as a locally constructed 'object' of modernist disruption and experimentation. In each particular space and time what are viewed as 'traditional' and conventional modes of representation, are historically concrete phenomena, which modernist artists and writers sought later to challenge in order to define their own distinctiveness. The field of cultural production, as Bourdieu (1995) calls it, where the modernists had an ambition to assert themselves as individuals rich with symbolic capital, in each case exhibited a very specific

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between locality as a structure of feeling, and neighborhoods as the actual social forms in which locality is embodied through the formation of what the anthropologist calls "local subjects" (Appadurai 1997, 178-200).

configuration, because in every particular cultural environment a different structure of power relations, ideological struggles and access to the market determined against whom and what the modernists stood in opposition. Thus, they justified, rejected, and attempted to transform different local traditions.

In literary studies on Western Modernism, the general premise has been that, in countries like France, or Britain and America, etc., the traditions modernists rebelled against were predominantly written literary traditions which were incorporated into the national canon. As Ruth Finnegan (1988) has observed, in western European cultural space the notion of 'literature' bears strong association with the notion of 'written.' This bias, as she emphasizes, over the last centuries of European history had determined the attitude of western scholars toward existing oral modes of communication. Accordingly, it had influenced the way the concept of 'literature' has been defined and interpreted. As Finnegan writes, "what was written was to be valued and analyzed; and what was not written was not worthy of scholarly study" (1988, 124).

Complementary to her observations is the previously mentioned comment of Eysteinsson, who acknowledges that modernists aspired to challenge and disrupt conventionalized modes of *literary writing*, or, as he refers to it, "the most immediate literary heritage" (1990, 59). Evidently, the sharp division of oral and written (i.e., strictly literary) modes of communication, which in western scholarly conceptualizations are viewed as two distinct, somewhat non-related or even opposed types of aesthetic communication, is another important factor that might have set obstacles for the study of Modernism's relationship with the local vernacular traditions. However, as Finnegan has argued, and I completely agree with her, "orality and literacy are not two separate and independent things; nor (to put it more correctly) are oral and written modes two mutually exclusive and opposed processes of representing and communicating information" (1988, 175). There are, as she convincingly shows, many diverse forms in which they might come into contact, and "there is a striking overlap between oral and written literature" (1988, 110). In this respect, I here share the same view as Finnegan. She fervently defends the position that "in differing cultures and periods [orality and literacy] are used differently in different social contexts, and insofar as they can be distinguished at all as separate modes rather than a continuum, they mutually interact and affect each other, and the relations between them are problematic rather than self-evident" (Finnegan 1988, 175).

In other words, it is somewhat naive to continue taking the relationship of vernacular traditions and Modernism for granted. By refusing to delve into the variety of forms in which traditional and modern culture at different places and times come into contact, we miss a chance to grasp the intricate way in which they are interpenetrating, and mutually nourishing each other. Essentially, what follows from recognizing the constantly changing dynamics of their relations is that the categories of 'literary' and 'tradition' are relativized. This means that in different cultural environments the term 'literature' will encompass different forms. In some cultures, it might refer to nothing but oral verbal expressions appreciated for their aesthetic qualities. In other contexts, both written and oral texts will constitute the literary heritage of a community. If it is true that in Western Europe, the term 'literature' refers above all to the established *written*, or even *printed* national literary traditions, incorporating above all individually authored works (cf. Allen 1985, 428 and Barber 1998, 837), it does not necessarily follow that the same assumption is universally valid. In Bulgaria and Ukraine for instance, as I tend to think, a clear distinction between 'written' and 'oral' literature arose due to the modernist project. In my view, the development of folklore studies as a scholarly discipline was also one of the outcomes of the 'modernization' (Europeanization) of Bulgarian and Ukrainian societies. It was during the period of Romanticism and Modernism that folklore research gained social recognition and became a professional enterprise in both countries. The history of this development, to some extent, will be the subject of discussion in the next chapters. Insofar as this topic will be broached again in later sections, it suffices to say here that Bulgarian and Ukrainian modernists were, in my view, the first to support such distinction by means of announcing a sharp division between 'high' and 'low' literature. I aspire to explain why they needed to do this in subsequent chapters.

As was previously mentioned, the manner in which 'tradition' is constituted and defined as Modernism's '*Other*' is of central importance in the study of modernist practices. Thus, in order to be able to explore these practices, it is necessary to define first what is meant by vernacular culture and folklore. My next section examines on the basis of recent scholarly discussions the changes introduced in contemporary theorizations and approaches to the study of local vernacular cultures.

1.2. Modernism's Other: Re-Defining 'Tradition'

I employ the terms 'vernacular' and 'local oral traditions' as synonyms. This, notwithstanding, I am aware, as Finnegan reminds us, that the terms do not necessarily overlap in their meaning. Thus, following her review of the concept of 'oral tradition,' I observe that in scholarly writing four different semantic attributes are usually ascribed to this expression. These are, namely, *verbal*, *non-written*, *belonging to the 'people'* (what conventionally is designated as *Volk*), *fundamental and valued* (1988, 7).[4] In this thesis I use both vernacular (folk) culture and local oral traditions to denote the everyday life practices of Ukrainian and Bulgarian peasants, from which the romantic, populist and modernist artists 'borrowed' raw material for their creative endeavors.

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[4] According to Finnegan what is usually meant by *Volk* is "non-educated, non-elite." Regarding the perception of 'oral tradition' as fundamental and valued, it is connoted because ostensibly such traditions are long-lasting, 'transmitted over generations, perhaps by the community or 'folk' rather than conscious individual actions' (1988, 7). Her comments are helpful to reveal what modernists, and in particular Bulgarian and Ukrainian modernists, saw as inherited vernacular traditions.

Reiterating Finnegan's opinion, the American folklorists Briggs and Shuman insist that it is important to reflect carefully on what we and others define as 'tradition' and for what purposes we (re)-construct this concept. But this is only one aspect of the problem. In addition, it is, perhaps, more important to keep in mind, as these scholars enthusiastically advise, that "[...] characterizing cultural forms as 'traditional' constitutes a powerful means of imbuing them with social value and authority" (Briggs and Shuman 1993, 116).

The folklorist Henry Glassie has defined tradition as "the many ways people convert the old into new." In his words, "[...] tradition is the creation of the future out of the past." The scholar admits that "[in] a continuous process situated in the nothingness of the present, linking the vanished with the unknown, tradition is stopped, parceled, and codified by thinkers who fix upon this aspect to that, in accord with their needs or preoccupations, and leave us with a scatter of apparently contradictory, yet cogent, definitions" (1995, 395). By means of stopping, parceling and codifying old forms, a tradition comes into existence, and what I see in the modernist re-invention of Bulgarian and Ukrainian vernacular cultures is namely a process of re-codification, and re-creation of traditional cultural items for the purposes of constructing a national high culture. In their imaginary totality such items are presented as symbols of the *Volk* 'roots' and offered to the modern audience as a revived or re-invented 'tradition.' Thus, when I use the term 'tradition,' I am referring to such consciously re-invented folk material.

With respect to folklore, Finnegan explicitly states that the term "has notorious problems too" (1992, 11). As the popular story runs, Sir W. Thoms coined the term around the middle of the 19th century. According to him, 'the lore of the people' referred to the survivals of the past: "the few ears which are remaining, scattered over that field from which our forefathers might have gathered a goodly crop" (qt. in Finnegan 1992, 11). At the time, according to Finnegan, the word was meant to serve as a substitute to the then fashionable expressions ‘popular antiquities’ and ‘popular literature’. A more recent definition of the term reads:

> Folklore (or traditional and popular culture) is the totality of tradition-based creations of a cultural community, expressed by a group or individuals and recognized as reflecting the expectations of a community in so far as they reflect its cultural and social identity; its standards and values are transmitted orally, by imitation or by other means. Its forms include, among others, language, literature, music dance, games, mythology, rituals, customs, handicrafts, architecture and other arts.[5]

This definition, perhaps, is too general to be applicable here. Some clues for its revision come directly from the writings of contemporary folklorists. More specifically, I refer to a statement of Dennis. L. Brenneis (1993). Commenting on Deborah Kapchan's article in the previously mentioned special issue of *Western Folklore*, he writes that the “classical artifact of folklore, the ‘item’ ” is no longer considered to be a “recapitulation of lineal past, but as the locus of a new animation of, and set of meanings for it” (296). In this light, the practice of “traditionalizing,” as Shuman and Briggs call it, is essential for the construction of traditions of various kinds, and moreover, folklore is, as they write, “always already (in Derrida's terms) a politics of culture” (Briggs and Shuman 1993, 112).[6] The fact that folklorists have widened the scope of their study to include all forms of artistic expressiveness[7] that could be characterized as “traditional, vernacular and local,” provides me with a chance to look at how exactly the “process of traditionalizing [and re-invention of] culture thus emerges as a locus of strategies for empowering particular groups, rhetorics, [and] interests" (Briggs and Shuman 1993, 116).

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[5] This, according to Finnegan, is the definition accepted by UNESCO. See in her book *Oral Traditions* the reference to L. Honko's citation (1988, 12).

[6] See also Shuman's statement that tradition in the view of folklorists is never a "monolithic static category" but rather "a process of inventing and appropriating the past" (1993, 361).

[7] One of Ben-Amos' famous definitions of folklore reveals that it encompasses "all conventional expressive devices available for performance and the achievement of performer status within a socially bounded group" (qt. in Hanson 1993, 329). Another, no less influential saying of the prominent American folklorist acknowledges that folklore is "artistic communication in small communities" (qt. in Briggs and Shuman 1993, 121).

American folklorists, and I presume many contemporary scholars in the humanities, tend to agree that 'traditions,' in this respect are, in the majority of cases 'invented,'[8] and so the category of 'authenticity' is, by definition, a contested notion. Today, as Paul W. Hanson (1993) argues, the new perspectives of folklore study take that into account. Moreover, according to him, the most significant shift in the focus of attention at present is from exploring the "ties that bind texts to their performative contexts" toward the investigation of what he calls "the situated discursive appropriation of texts from previous contexts."[9] In Hanson's understanding, the highly textualized and valued segments of ritual performances – and I dare to extend his assertion to other traditional forms as well – are often "issued travel visas that allow them to be decontextualized and recontextualized along socially recognized pathways." Thus, the scholar claims that the theorization of practices (defined by Bauman and Briggs as "entextualization, decontextualization, and recontextualization")[10] is of central importance in the contemporary study of folklore (Hanson 1993, 332). In my view, the essentialization of the vernacular culture, its selective revision and re-invention fits well such an intellectual 'schema,' and I hope that approaches like Bauman's and Briggs' are indeed as helpful as they seem to be for explicating the politics of cultural change and alteration governing the modernist mobilization and manipulation of traditional cultural codes and sings.

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[8] The notion of "invented tradition" is used in the sense meant by Eric Hobsbawm who described the invention of tradition as a "process of formalization and ritualization, characterized by reference to the past, if only by repetition." "Invented tradition," he writes, "is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past" (1983, 4; 1). The theorist shows that ancient materials can be used to construct invented traditions of a novel type, and it seems to me that both Bulgarian and Ukrainian folklore in that sense, are 'invented traditions.' They were constructed for the purposes of Bulgarian and Ukrainian nation-building during the period of Romanticism; they were contested and modified in modernist times; they were irreversibly altered through a subjugation to the hegemony of socialist politics, but nevertheless, re-emerging like a phoenix from the ashes, always in periods of transition and crisis when the cultural distinctiveness of Bulgarian and Ukrainian national identity was at stake.

[9] Interesting also is the comment of Shuman. She recognizes the change to be in the fact that some "folklorists have moved from a goal of documenting and/or conserving dying traditions to studies of the commodification of culture" (Shuman 1993, 362).

[10] Cf. Hanson's discussion of Bauman's and Briggs' work (1993, 332-33).

Another important aspect of modern approaches to folklore is the awareness that 'local' as well as *Volk* are not neutral categories. As Amy Shuman (1993) asserts, "[…] local culture is always marked and always part of a larger-than-local context" (345). What is especially important, therefore, is to see how the concepts of 'locality' and *Volk* were constructed in any particular period and place, and what political interests were projected in these; how the imagined localities and group identities become locus of negotiation, and were naturalized, thus proving indispensable ideological tools in the fabrication, manipulation and maintenance of particular power positions. In this respect, as Shuman argues, "one of the central contributions folkloristics can make to a politics of culture is to name the invention of the category 'folk' as a place-holder for what modernists [did] not study" (1993, 361). At this point, it is necessary to indicate that when using the term 'folklore,' I refer to invented vernacular traditions.

In light of these comments, it is also imperative to clarify the principles according to which the concept of 'nation' was constructed and rendered linguistically in the Bulgarian and Ukrainian cultural contexts during the 19th and early 20th century. I include the following note on translation in order to justify the rendition of a number of Bulgarian and Ukrainian terms (*narod*, *natsiia*, *rasa* and their derivatives), which I employ as equivalents to the English words 'nation' and 'national.' Let me start by briefly examining the theoretical premises that underlie my translation of the words *narod* and *naroden*. In both languages the word *narod* is a common designator, initially used by the romantic intellectuals, to identify 'the people' as a collective historical subject that was "seen as the bearer of sovereignty, the central object of loyalty, and the basis of collective solidarity" (cf. Greenfeld 1996b, 10).

Greenfeld's concept of 'people' refers to "a mass of population whose boundaries and nature are defined in various ways, but which is usually perceived as larger than any concrete community and always fundamentally homogeneous (essentially a community of equals) and only superficially divided by the lines of status, class, locality, or, in rare cases, even ethnicity" (1996b, 10-11). She informs us that the English noun 'people' was a term that initially was applied to the lower classes and was often used "in the sense of 'rabble' or 'plebs'. " In her view, "the redefinition of the 'people' as a 'nation' symbolically elevated the populace to the dignity of an elite" (1996, 11). In most countries, the process took place during the modern period, and was clearly associated with the modernization and nationalization of their respective societies. This process manifested itself in the attempts of local intellectuals to articulate a national identity which, in agreement with Greenfeld's reading, is meant here to describe "a person's – and group's – position in the social world." This position derives from membership in a given 'people,' a political agent that the modern world recognizes as a 'nation,' that is, the bearer of sovereignty and cultural distinctiveness. As Greenfeld maintains,

> Every member of the 'people' so interpreted partakes in [the nation's] superior, elite quality, and it is in consequence that a stratified national population is perceived as essentially homogenenous and the people as sovereign. This principle lies at the basis of all nationalisms and justifies viewing them as expressions of the same general phenomenon, even though apart from it they share little. Modern society is a society based on this principle of nationality. It is this principle that made possible and in some instances caused the development of major economic and political 'structures of modernity' (1996b, 11).

With respect to the English term 'nation,' Greenfeld claims that it acquired its modern meaning in the early 16th century when it was used as a synonym of the 'people.' According to her, "it meant 'an elite' and specifically referred to an elite of representatives of cultural and political authority" (1996b, 11). Here, I espouse Greenfeld's interpretation of this term because it makes clear the distinctive historical usage of the English words 'people' and 'nation,' thus emphasizing their conceptual differences. I find her semantic explorations helpful in validating my interpretation of the Bulgarian and Ukrainian terms *narod* and *natsiia* (nation) as synonymous. In my translations I try to emphasize the historical continuity of the uses of the concepts nation and 'people' as these were locally constructed and articulated in the Bulgarian and Ukrainian contexts, while simultaneously showing that their equation was a phenomenon that in both localities occurred with the advancement of modernity. "The equation of the two concepts – 'people' and 'nation'," as Greenfeld has argued for England, "signified a conceptual revolution." This is also noted in the Bulgarian and Ukrainian contexts, where the gradual redefinition of the term *narod* (people) and its substitution with the term *natsiia* (nation) resulted from a number of structural and semantic changes that occurred in the course of the 19th and 20th century.

An objective of this study is to trace some of the most significant aspects of such structural and semantic changes in the attempt to highlight the complexity of the processes of Bulgarian and Ukrainian self-determination. Although not central to my study, I will attempt to show that the processes of nationalization and modernization pose certain linguistic difficulties since at each stage the concepts and linguistic terms – popularized as common designators of the nation – "evolved out of usage within a particular set of structural constraints" (Greenfeld 1996b, 11-12). As Greenfeld warns,

> The dominant meaning of [such terms] at any given time [was] applied within circumstances to a certain aspect of which [they] corresponded. However, other aspects of these circumstances, which did not originally correspond to this dominant meaning, became associated with the word, creating a duality of meaning. The initially dominant meaning was gradually eclipsed, a new one emerged as dominant, and, while the word was retained, one concept gave way to another. This process of semantic transformation was constantly redirected by structural constraints, which formed new concepts. At the same time, the structural constraints were conceptualized, interpreted, or defined in terms of the inherited concepts, which oriented social action. As the concepts evolved, the definition of the situation changed, [thus] changing the orientations too (1996b, 12).

From this perspective, hereafter I will translate the word *narod* either as *demos*, or as 'people,' using both terms to convey an ethnic definition of the Bulgarian and Ukrainian nation. The first patriotic intellectuals utilized this term in an attempt to articulate key cultural-linguistic principles of Bulgarian and Ukrainian national identity. To a certain degree then, the term betrays a close semantic relation to the German notion of *Volk*. Its usage manifests a typically romantic approach to national self-determination, which insisted on defining the nation as a genealogical community bound by a common vernacular language, history and culture. It is necessary to note that here I will use the term *Volk* rarely, and mostly in contexts that feature a demotic model of national identification. In both Ukraine and Bulgaria this demotic model affirmed the peasantry as the core of Bulgarian and Ukrainian nation, and interpreted the 'people' primarily as *Volk* (i.e., the uneducated, the non-elite, peasants). As I will try to show, during the 19th century Ukrainian and Bulgarian romantic intellectuals identified peasants as the bearers of cultural distinctiveness and the central object of patriotic loyalty and love. They constructed a national identity that elevated the value of vernacular culture as the ultimate expression of national identity, establishing the 'plebs' as an absolute agent of political and cultural authority.

The concept *natsiia* (nation) is less confusing since in both localities the term was adopted as an equivalent of 'nation.' The popularization of this term at the end of the 19th century signaled a new shift in the intellectual conceptualization of Bulgarian and Ukrainian national identity, which clearly indicated the inclusion of a new set of principles – primarily political – that began defining the respective national community. Thus, the term was 'imported' and used as a local rendition of the European notion of nation as a civic society, and clearly was associated with the endorsement of democracy and civil rights. My study argues that Ukrainian and Bulgarian modernists were some of the most active historical agents in promoting the civic concept of nation. They operated with a notion of nation (*natsiia*) that, as I will try to prove later, was an inherently contradictory concept because it encompassed both civic and ethnic criteria for group-identification. Thus, the term *natsiia* (nation) was often used as a synonym for the 'people.' Although in some cases I translate both *narod* and *natsiia* as 'nation,' I will keep their semantic differences clear by adding in parentheses the original word used by the local writer in hope that the meaning of these terms will not be confused.

Lastly, I want to point out that I translate the Bulgarian word *rasa* – which literally means 'race' in English – as 'nation' and 'national' because in the 1920s-1930s the term was also used to convey the idea of nation (Elenkov 1998, 126-127). *Rasa* and its derivative adjective *rasov* at that time were popular among the members of Bulgarian quasi-fascist and extremely rightist political and cultural organizations, which embraced the principle of ethnic homogeneity and uncontaminated genealogical ancestry (e.g., the youth organization *Brannik*, the *Military League*, and so on). Yet, *rasa* – as Elenkov maintains – was also a popular term among certain intellectuals, who used it in order to accentuate the 'autochthonous' character and ethnic singularity of the Bulgarian people (e.g., Kiril Khristov, Professor Metodi Popov; Elenkov 1998, 127). Teodor Traianov, in fact, interpreted this term as a synonym of nation and employed it to emphasize Bulgarian cultural distinctiveness. In this manner, he expressed a burning concern with, and anxiety over, the unsolved national problem and the uncertainty of national future.

Let me now continue with the exposition of my conceptual framework. With respect to the study of the relationship between Modernism and local vernacular cultures I notice that, despite the fact that folklore was often constituted as the '*Other*' of Modernism, evidence for the interests of western European modernists in reviving and re-inventing elements from the local vernacular traditions is not lacking. Here I will point out only two such instances, although I am convinced that numerous others can be easily found if one is willing to challenge the stereotypical interpretative models and techniques of mainstream literary criticism. The first example is the use of Irish folk tradition in Yeats' modernist experimentation. According to Michael Tratner, "Yeats sought all his life to write a poetry that would express or create a national mind." Thus, as Tratner argues, in works such as "I See Phantoms" and "Nineteenth and Nineteen" the poet delved into Irish traditions in order to create the images of the new 'leadership' that modernists aspired to produce (1996, 135; 156).[11] The second writer, worth mentioning in this regard, is James Joyce. His hallmark modernist novel *Ulysses*, according to Eysteinsson, "is seething with popular culture: *popular songs and musi*c, bits and pieces out of newspapers, [...], brothels, *pub talk*, reverberations from popular novels" (1990, 121; Italics mine). In this context pertinent also is Tratner's comment that "in *Ulysses*, changes of social setting are marked by changes in style so complete that we often loose track of which characters we are following. Most of the styles used in the text are, [...], *'anonymous, collective discourse,'* so that sentences seem to derive from institutions that shape characters and authors alike rather than from any individual mind" (1996, 25; Italics mine).[12]

Along the same lines, one may also recollect the fascination of *fin-de-siècle* French artists, such as Henry Rousseau and Paul Guillaume for instance, with folk art and performances. According to Salmatanos, in the article "Folk Art" published in *Paris-Journal* on July 25, 1914 by Apollinaire, the latter observed that folk art was "definitely in vogue these days." In Apollinaire's view, Roussau's experimentation was "catalytic for this new fashion," and Samaltanos continues by stating that "[Rousseau's] [...] success pushed collectors and curiosity seekers to search for peasant and folk paintings" (qt. in Samaltanos 1984, 34). Thus, Salmantos' intepretation is that "the arbitrary combination of naturalistic elements in a non-naturalistic context, the creation of a non-naturalistic realism, appealed to 20th century taste. It accounted for the appreciation of Rousseau along with Negro and folk art" (1984, 36). The situation is not at all that simple, as this commentary, imbued with strong formalist innuendo, suggests. What was most of all appreciated and praised in Rousseau's art was, to put it in the words of one of his admirers, "the miraculousness" of his talent, the fact that his creativity seemed to spring directly from the 'unconscious' (qt. in Samaltanos 35). The concept of 'unconscious' in modernist works, as Tratner (1996) convincingly shows, was of a very controversial nature, for it was usually associated with the psychology of the crowd and the mass mind. In other words, the 'unconscious' in the modernist discourses presents itself less as an individualistic, but rather as a collective category, describing a fundamental property of the human mind.

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[11] See also Mary Helen Thuente's book *W.B. Yeats and Folklore* (Totowa, N. J.: Barnes and Noble, 1980).

[12] Also, Marguerite Quintelli-Neary (1997) offers a very illuminating and elaborate analysis of Joyce's treatment of traditional Celtic motifs in *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* in her study *Folklore and the Fantastic in Twelve Modern Irish Novels*

The attitude of modernists toward vernacular traditions, especially if one has in mind literature, was thus, nothing but simple. Tratner cogently argues that the modernists were simultaneously fascinated and afraid of using folk (popular) culture in their artistic quests. Aiming at expressing the 'pure spirit' and the sublime truth about human consciousness and creativity, they epitomized the 'mass unconscious' and delved into the anonymous, uncontrollable creative impulses of the 'mob.' In this manner, they strove to master the language of the unconscious believing, as the scholar writes, that " [...] vast collective entities such as classes, genders, nationalities shape the individual mind [...]." (Tratner 1996, 3).

It is noteworthy that the critic even ventures an unconventional periodization of Modernism, proposing two stages, arguing that in the first period the West European modernists were terrified by the 'masses,' and transformed the 'mob' (or *Volk*) into a symbol of suppressed potentials and powers. By means of such transformation the 'mass unconscious' became tightly linked to notions and

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(Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press; 25-58; 59-82).

images of sexual potency, racial and cultural differences, and the feminine. These were conceived of not as alternatives but as a source of psychological energies that would allow for individuals such as Yeats, Woolf, Eliot, etc. to acquire a completed identity in which the collective and the individual would ultimately blend (Tratner 1996, 132-134). So, the early period these writers' literary careers "was characterized by a desire to remain separate from the masses and by a horror at the inability to do so" (Tratner 1996, 136).

The second phase, as the scholar describes it, was dominated by their endeavors to "develop workable structures for speaking to and from the mass unconscious." During this period modernists joined the masses, and began serving 'collective causes,' affirming themselves as cultural and political leaders. Tratner conceptualizes Yeats' literary development as an exemplary case, one illuminating best the transition from individualistic to a collectivist vision of the human personality that, according to the critic, took place in modernist writing. In Tratner's view, the poet gradually reached the conclusion that the individual cannot "hold the 'essence' of the nation in his mind," therefore "the only way to create a nation [was] to disrupt the individual mind" (1996, 135). In this respect, as Tratner argues, one has to look at modernist disruption as a shift from "representing individuals to representing masses." This change, states the critic, "was a change in artistic style as much as a change in politics" (1996, 68). I find his understanding extremely insightful, and I wholeheartedly align myself with his position. Here, it will be my task to show how exactly this change in politics and style occurred in Bulgaria and Ukraine, and what special role the vernacular tradition – invented as a symbol of the 'mass unconscious' – played in the projects of Bulgarian and Ukrainian modernists to establish themselves as the cultural leadership of their nations.

More revealing of the changing perceptions of Western literary scholarship and the recent shift toward more careful examination of the use of folklore in modernist art is the previously mentioned book of Marguerite

Quintelli-Neary (1997). She maintains that modern Irish novelists such as James Joyce, Flann O'Brien, Mervyn Wall, Darrell Figgis and others, "raised in a tradition of orality combined with exposure to in-depth scholarly research and findings, in both academic and popular writing, *used elements from myth and folklore to their own purposes*" (2; italics mine). Quintelli-Neary acknowledges that "[w]hether freely blending motifs from assorted source works in fantasy writing, or religious satire, they assert the uniquely Irish quality of their writing and evince their ability to recycle motifs from well-worn tales" (1997, 2). She warns against a simplistic interpretation of the treatment of folkloric and mythological elements in the modern novels as "an attempt to denigrate the tradition or rob it of its dignity." Fitting William R. Bascom's functional approach to folklore, Quintelli-Neary suggests that the effect of folklore elements used in modern Irish novels was "to validate culture, to educate, to maintain conformity, and to allow for escape in fantasy from repressions imposed on men by society" (1997, 3).

I agree with her, but my approach is based on a different set of theoretical sources. In principle, my desire is to tackle the problem of modernist mobilization and intellectual manipulation of the local vernacular culture from an interdisciplinary point of view. Thus, the theoretical framework of this study constitutes an eclectic web of ideas coming from sociology, social psychology, postcolonial literary theory, and anthropology. Briefly outlined, let me conclude this chapter by introducing Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice (1990a). It presents the intellectual model informing my work's most general conceptual frame of reference. The rest of my theoretical sources will be critically reviewed in subsequent parts of the thesis, usually as a means of setting up the intellectual backdrop for the proposed explanations and analyses.

1.3. Clearing the Grounds: Methodological Concerns

In the light of Bourdieu's self-reflective theory, I would begin the synopsis of his work that is pertinent to this study by remarking that I see in his intellectualizations an attempt to propose a more realistic and accurate 'micro-theory' of human practices, which draws attention to the fact that researchers are human agents and therefore, are not completely objective in their approach and handling of the facts.

Regardless of the various critiques to which Bourdieu's theory of practice and in general his sociological method can be subjected, it is clear that the scholar insists on acknowledging that we always analyze reality from a particular perspective, bringing our value judgments into "the spectacle offered to [us]" (Bourdieu 1990a, 52). In this respect, what I most appreciate in Bourdieu's approach to literature and culture is his attempt to offer a method that, as Jenkins has pointed out, "is concerned with what individuals do in their daily lives," avoiding the pitfalls of interpreting human practices as solely determined by the individual's decision making, as on the one hand, sociological subjectivism would have it, or defined by the supra-individual structures of society as, on the other hand, sociological objectivism would have it (Jenkins 1992). For the eminent French sociologist, social practice is embodied knowledge, an integral part of social agents' behavior that is manifested in their ways of life. In this respect, I find Bourdieu's theory a particularly powerful tool for explaining workings of culture that are not readily available for critical analysis because they are part of our own regime of truth. Although his demand for showing our intellectual biases is somewhat trivial, I highly value the scholar's struggle to define an analytical mode that "neither imposes [relations and rules] from the outside nor turns from the actual workings of practice toward a formalization imposed by its own logic" (Loesberg 1993, 1035). In my view, his effort to produce a description that is both 'independent' from the immediate primary experience yet providing objective elucidation of such experience – while striving to grasp the rules that govern the practice as one is engaged in it – is most commendable. Having stated this, let me also add that I do not see Bourdieu's theory as a universally applicable system of propositions but rather as a network of ideas one can borrow from and, with a certain dose of skepticism, adjust to fit one's particular ends. In this light, the concepts I assess as most useful in directing the following analyses and discussions are Bourdieu's definitions of *habitus*, symbolic power, and taste.

The concept of *habitus* is a key to understanding Bourdieu's sociological method. As John B. Thompson has pointed out in his introduction to the English translation of Bourdieu's *Language and Symbolic Power*, the notion has been known since the times of Aristotle and classical antiquity, but the French sociologist "uses it in a distinctive and quite specific way" (1999, 12). Bourdieu defines the *habitus* as a "system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures [or] principles that generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them" (Bourdieu 1990a, 53). He views such principles as formed through a historical interaction between social agents, who in their behavior are guided by certain regularities "inherent in [the] arbitrary condition" that is one's social world. These principles "tend to appear necessary, even natural, since they are the basis of the schemes of perception and appreciation through which they are apprehended" (Bourdieu 1990a, 53-54). The *habitus* then functions as an organizing cognitive framework that ensures "the active presence of past experiences, which, deposited in each organism in the form of schemes of perception, of thought and action, tend to guarantee the 'correctness' of practices and their constancy over time, more reliably than all formal rules and explicit norms" (Bourdieu 1990a, 54). "This system of dispositions [is] a present past that tends to perpetuate itself into the future by reactivation in similarly structured practices, an internal law through which the law of external necessities, irreducible to immediate constraints, is constantly exerted…" (Bourdieu 1990a, 54).

At a first glance, it may seem that Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* refers to those unwritten rules that generate and guide our dispositions and reactions to the world, and which are embedded in the particular culture wherein we dwell. The *habitus* operates in the twilight zone between completely conscious and subconscious modes of thought, involving (learned) knowledge that we usually take for granted, yet is available for reflective intellectualizations once we make the effort to analyze it. The *habitus* then, may appear as that social mechanism (or system of rules) that enforces continuity in the social world by imposing certain cultural limitations to our actions and defines our outlook on life. It is not surprising that some scholars (May 1996, 133-134) have accused Bourdieu of failing to show how historical changes in the social system occur over time, undermining and imperceptibly altering "the system of generative schemes" that is the *habitus* (Bourdieu 1990a, 55). However, in my view, the French theorist is fully aware of such changes, and although he does not make these an explicit object of intellectual scrutiny, the implications are quite clear. For example, Bourdieu admits that the *habitus* "makes possible the free production of all the thoughts, perceptions, and actions inherent in the particular conditions of its production" thereby suggesting that it is important to explore the change in the conditions that require the invention and re-invention of a particular *habitus*. "Because the *habitus* is an infinite capacity for generating products – thoughts, perceptions, expressions and actions – whose limits are set by the historically and socially situated conditions of its production, the conditioned and conditional freedom it provides is as remote from creation of unpredictable novelty as it is from simple mechanical reproduction of the original conditioning" (1990a, 55).

It is not difficult to understand why I like Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, considering that I intend to analyze the cultural practice of Modernism as one that was globally known, but reproduced under very different political and social conditions. From this perspective, it is impossible to look for European Modernism's 'mechanical reproduction' as it is impossible to neglect the limitations imposed on the realization of the modernist practices by the conditions of their original conception. Therefore, analyses that assess the originality of the local versions of Modernism, or different local modernist movements from the standpoint of a universal model, checking the quality of the 'reproductions' against a limited list of characteristic features, thus claiming the unsuccessful or imitative nature of the modernist practices in these more or less 'peripheral' societies, seem to be quite impoverished.

I think that in the perspective of my scholarly research – and yielding to the purpose of this investigation – Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* offers a chance to grasp the intricate dialectic between "an objectifying intention and the already objectified intention" that allows the unity of a lifestyle of a group to be described in historical terms. As Bourdieu contends,

> the genesis of a system of works or practices generated by the same *habitus* (or homologus *habitus*, such as those that underlie the unity of a life-style of a group or a class) cannot be described either as the autonomous development of a unique and always self-identical essence, or as a continuous creation of novelty, because it arises from the necessary yet unpredictable confrontation between the *habitus* and an event that can exercise a pertinent incitement on the *habitus* (1990a, 55).

In this regard, I take to heart his warning that "the *habitus* like every 'art of inventing' is what makes it possible to produce an infinite number of practices that are relatively unpredictable (like the corresponding situations) but also limited in their diversity" (Bourdieu 1990a, 55). Modernism, then, was such a *habitus* that generated in various localities very distinctive and unpredictable, yet limited diversity of cultural practices, which while replicating the general system of dispositions that structured the behavior of the modernists in those localities allowed them also to change the 'rules' so that these become "objectively adjusted to the logic characteristic of a particular [social-cultural reality]" (Bourdieu 1990a, 56).

Relating this to the Bulgarian and Ukrainian versions of Modernism, it seems the concept of Bourdieu's *habitus* accurately captures and accounts for the differences of these movements in comparison to the 'original' conditions that generated the modernist *habitus* and practices. Therefore, I acknowledge Bourdieu's extremely insightful suggestion that a particular *habitus* can be accounted for only "by relating the social conditions in which the *habitus* that generated them was constituted, to the social conditions in which it is implemented [...]" (Bourdieu 1990a, 56). Together with the French sociologist, I view the modernist *habitus* and the practices it generated as "embodied history" (Bourdieu 1990a, 56). Moreover, his concept seems helpful in explaining the specific workings of the 'internalized' Modernist *habitus*, which in both localities produced certain attitudes to, and relationships with, the existing traditions, life-styles and mentality (is it possible to call these 'local *habitus*'?) that significantly differed from the conditions of its initial conception. In addition, Bourdieu points out that "being produced by a *modus operandi* [...] which outruns the conscious intentions of its apparent author and constantly offers new pertinent stimuli to the *modus operandi* of which it is the product and which functions as a kind of 'spiritual automation'," the *habitus* is "a mode of objectification of past history, in which there is constantly created a history that inevitably appears, like witticisms, as both original and inevitable" (Bourdieu 1990a, 57).

The Bulgarian and Ukrainian modernist movements, then, were what Bourdieu calls "regulated improvisations" that need not be confused with the originally formulated model. They are variations that have their own logic of practice that cannot be completely explained through the established mainstream forms of Western modernist criticism. Thus, inspired by Bourdieu, I attempt in this study on the grounds of his theory of practice to articulate an alternative interpretation of Bulgarian and Ukrainian Modernism, which recognizes that "the methods, channels, and means of presenting knowledge are anything but secondary to its contents" (Fabian, qt. in Jusdanis 1991, xvii). However, I hasten to add that it is not my intention to draft an alternate theory, but simply to flesh out the cultural differences that can assist the formulation of such a theory (cf. also Jusdanis's similar position 1991, xvi-xvii). In this respect, and strongly in resonance with Bourdieu's analytical reflectivity, my study also aims at showing that our apparently individual intellectual approaches to universally recognized facts "are more than innocent responses to self-evident truths" (Jusdanis 1991, xvii).

The second concept that I borrowed from Bourdieu is that of symbolic power (1985, 1993, 1999). I find it useful for the explication of the modernist logic of action. The modernists vociferously attempt to conceal their relation to the existing field of political and economic power, seeking to establish an opposing if not an alternative source of power. Thus, the symbolic systems of art, language, and ultimately culture, become the focus of their effort. In this respect, culture in their practices emerges as a "means and end in competitive struggles for social position," an idea that, as Jenkins points out, Bourdieu has addressed with much intellectual rigor and clarity (1992, 179).

The first characteristic of symbolic power according to Bourdieu is that it is "invisible power which can be exercised only with the complicity of those who do not want to know that they are subject to it or even that they themselves exercise it" (1999, 164). To possess symbolic power means to have control over the "instruments of knowledge and communication" (1999, 166). It is a power to construct reality by establishing the "immediate meaning of the world," that is, by imposing a "homogeneous conception of time, space, number and cause, one which makes it possible for different intellects to reach agreement" (Bourdieu 1999, 166). As the French theorist suggests, the purpose of symbolic power is to achieve solidarity on the bases of the 'shared' representation of the social world since symbols are "the instruments *par excellence* of 'social integration:' as instruments of knowledge and communication […] [that] make it possible for there to be a consensus which contributes fundamentally to the reproduction of the social order" (Bourdieu 1999, 166). Symbolic power, in other words, is also a political power in the sense that it preconditions the integration of society as a whole providing the ideology that justifies and makes legitimate the hierarchy of distinctions thus contributing to the legitimization of the established social order. In short, the symbolic power is the power of the dominant culture, which produces unity "by concealing the function of division beneath the function of communication" while at once affirming and "legitimating the distinctions by forcing all other cultures (designated as sub-cultures) to define themselves by their distance from the dominant culture" (Bourdieu 1999, 167). Within a given social order, the different fractions of society are "engaged in symbolic struggle properly speaking, one aimed at imposing definition of the social world that is best suited to their interests." In this respect, "the field of ideological stances thus reproduces in transfigured form the field of social positions" (Bourdieu 1999, 167).

Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power, therefore, is significant for the analysis of Modernism as a particular practice that attempted to disrupt certain developments in a given locality, seeking the revision if not complete transformation of the established social order and above all, the hierarchy of social positions. I think that Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power offers a feasible explication of the modernist orientation towards the channels of communication allowing one to grasp the hidden political agenda of the modernist movement as a form of social critique. As Loesberg has put it, "the cultural becomes an intrinsic value in terms of its opposition to economic domination" (1993, 1045). I will resort to Loesberg's explanation of the concept of symbolic capital, which is derivative from the concept of symbolic power in order to point out those specific moments in Bourdieu's theory of practice that emphasize the political function of art, literature and culture in general. According to Loesberg, in Bourdieu's theorizations,

> Symbolic capital, then, is not merely a symbol for economic capital but the capital that exists when economic interests are denied or negated. This

> negation can occur in a pre-capitalist economy. But it can also occur in a capitalist economy when agents resist economic interests. Finally, capital per se amounts to the value that motivates any conversion, whether economic exchange or the disguise of economic exchange. One might argue that disguise is always a form of exchange, but this would be true only if exchange were always a form of disguise. From this perspective, then, capital just is symbolic (1993, 1046).

It is clear then that the concepts of symbolic power and symbolic capital are conceived as designating a particular displacement of meaning that leads to the realization that symbolic systems "owe their distinctive power to the fact that the relations of power expressed through them are manifested in the misrecognizable form of relations of meaning" (Bourdieu 1999, 170). As Bourdieu insists,

> symbolic power as a power of constituting the given through utterances, of making people see and believe, of conforming or transforming the vision of the world, and thereby, action on the world and thus the world itself, an almost magical power which enables one to obtain the equivalent of what is obtained through force (whether physical or economic), by virtue of the specific effect of mobilization – is a power that can be exercised only if it is recognized, that is misrecognized, as arbitrary. This means that symbolic power does not reside in 'symbolic systems' in the form of an 'illocutionary force' but that it is defined in and through a given relation between those who exercise power and those who submit to it, i.e., in the very structure of the field in which *belief* is produced and reproduced (Bourdieu 1999, 170; author's italics).

In light of my main point that the modernist project in Bulgaria and Ukraine, two 'peripheral' localities, was also a nationalizing enterprise, Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power could be interpreted as a power of persuasion and mobilization that allowed the local modernists to subvert the existing *habitus* by showing that transgression of the established relations of power was possible. As a result, what the modernist projects in both localities achieved, in my view, was to pose the 'political' as problematic, simultaneously enhancing the value of the 'cultural' as a key factor in the processes of social integration. The formulation of alternative models of national development by the modernists in Bulgaria and Ukraine, then, can be interpreted as a practice that "represents the power to confer meanings upon social reality whilst also providing for a social recognition of one's place within social relations" (May 1996, 125-26). Again, in Bourdieu's theory of practice I find possibilities that support the elaboration of a form of political criticism to the mainstream western approaches to Modernism, one that explicitly emphasizes the importance of historicizing our notion of difference (in this way also undermining the influences coming from Bourdieu's theorizations on the formation of the modern literary field in mid-19th century France, for I deem these ineffective if directly applied to the conditions in Bulgaria and Ukraine). In this instance, then, Bourdieu's theory of practice is – in Jenkins' words – "good to think with" while attempting explanations that come primarily from the specific textual material.

The last of Bourdieu's notions that I find extremely pertinent to the discussion of Bulgarian and Ukrainian Modernism is his concept of taste. Here I will offer a very brief synopsis of his interpretation since later in the analysis more will be said on this matter. In principle, I read Bourdieu's concept of taste as a classificatory category which functions mainly as a means to organize, express and maintain social distinctions. As he writes,

> in fact, through the economic and social conditions which they presuppose, the different ways of relating to realities and fictions, of believing in fictions and the realities they simulate, with more or less distance and detachment, are very closely linked to the different possible positions in social space and, consequently, bound up with the systems of dispositions (*habitus*) characteristic of the different classes and class fractions. *Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier.* Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar, in which their position in the objective classifications is expressed or betrayed (Bourdieu 1984, 56).

In the French sociologist's theory, the notion of taste emerges as a key element of individuals' lifestyles. People with similar tastes tend to have similar lifestyles and on this basis, also tend to group together. As a significant part of the *habitus*, tastes affect the choices of individuals thus determining their behavior too. However, the aspect that I find particularly insightful is Bourdieu's proposition that taste is one of the key signifiers of social identity. Moreover, in his analyses, taste is conceptualized as a seminal element of one's social identity.

Once recognizing this, it is not difficult then to see how and why taste becomes important factor in the game of political struggle and more particularly, in the "conflict about *who* defines *what* as culture and art" (Jenkins 1992, 129; author's italics). According to Jenkins, Bourdieu's theory while failing to provide a plausible explanation for "the rise of [M]odernism" (1992, 149), clearly has indicated the significance of cultural struggles, suggesting that in fact conflicts over the content and function of culture "have hardened the boundaries of taste [...]" (1992, 129).

I see the value of Bourdieu's concept of taste predominantly in his suggestion that taste is a determinant and an element of social identity. By the same token, I applaud his effort to constitute taste as a sign of struggles and competition over status and cultural distinction, in this way making taste a vital analytical category for the study of nationalism as well. But first, let me cite what Bourdieu says about the struggles for recognition of cultural distinctions:

> In my earliest analyses of honor [...] you find all the problems that I am still tackling today: the idea that *struggles for recognition are fundamental dimension of social life* and that what is at stake in them is an accumulation of a particular form of capital, honor in the sense of reputation and prestige, and that there is, therefore, a specific logic behind the accumulation of symbolic capital [...] (Bourdieu 1990b, 22; italics mine).

From this perspective, what is more fundamental than the sense of cultural distinction that triggers the desire of a people to pursue their independence? If we approach the nation and the struggles to establish a national culture as a field of possibilities defined in Bourdieu's terms, I think we are more capable of also grasping the peculiar logic of nationalism as a social practice that "offers a sufficient range of relationships of similarity and dissimilarity with respect to its products to constitute a 'system of differences' which allows the comprehensive expression of basic social differences [social stratification] and well-nigh inexhaustible possibilities for the pursuit of distinction" (Bourdieu qt. in Jenkins 1992, 142). The nation, in the light of Bourdieu's sociological method, can be seen then as a social space, "a multidimensional arena in which economic and cultural capital are both the objects *and* the weapons of a competitive struggle between social agents," who seek to articulate and implement competing visions of their social world (Jenkins 1992, 142; author's italics). Suggestively then, Bourdieu's theory of practice, regardless of its inherent inconsistencies and limitations, offers a theoretical model that accounts for 'the choice of the necessary' available to social agents in their efforts to sustain and realize in practice the political ideal of the nation.[13]

In conclusion, I believe that cross-breeding between different disciplines could enrich our thought processes tremendously, and at the same time encourage us to engage in a mutually beneficial dialogue, thus opening "a space for debate that [would] allow scholars to *hear* one another and *agree* with each other," as Bourdieu hoped, "at least enough to enter into [such] a constructive dialogue" (1991, 373; author's italics). It is with such an intention that my work was conceived.

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[13] Andrew Thompson proposes a reading of nationalism from a more agent-oriented perspective in his article "Nations, National Identities, and Human Agency: Putting People Back into Nations," *Sociological Review* 49.1 (February 2001): 18-33; cf. also Norbert Elias' successful use of Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* in relation to national character (*The Germans* [Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996]).

2. THE NATIONALIZATION OF UKRAINIAN SOCIETY

In the course of the 19th century the modern international system based on separate nation-states gradually emerged, resulting in the rapid spread of the idea of nation as a political principle that affirmed the congruency of political and cultural unity. For example, in his book *Nationalism*, published in 1997, Ernest Gellner, the renowned contemporary theoretician of nationalism claims that this modern political philosophy is based on the principle that "homogeneity of culture is *the* political bond." As he writes, the "mastery of [and one should add, acceptability in] a given high culture [...] is the precondition of political, economic and social citizenship" (29; author's italics).

The emergence of nationalism as an appealing philosophy underlying the arrangement of international relations, created the general intellectual premises that allowed for the idea of nation to be conceived and pursued as a reality in different regions of Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa. National identity became known, respectively, as a psychological and social condition that "linked the individual to the world order" (Treanor 1997). The forming national political elites, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe, thus expressed their desires for participation in a global rather than regional geopolitical system, which supported the exercise of public authority and provided opportunities for the realization of the new humanitarian agenda of increased self-direction, autonomy and liberty (cf. Picket 1996, 10-23).

If we agree that national identity "describes that condition in which a mass of people have made the same identification with national symbols – have internalized the symbols of the nation – so they may act as one psychological group when there is a threat to, or the possibility of enhancement of, these symbols of national identity" (Bloom 1990, 50), then, it is crucial to look at Ukrainian intellectuals' discursive work in order to trace – as Greenfeld (1996b) in principle has advised – both the semantic and the structural transformations that in the early 20th century led to the nationalization of Ukrainian society. Also, as Treanor (1997) advocates, the "standard nationalist thought says more about nationalism than the immediate goals of any one nationalist group." Apparently, such "standard nationalist thought" is more revealing of the mechanisms involved in the formation of a nation than any scholarly theorization on nationalism and national identity might ever suggest. Before proceeding further with the analysis, let me also repeat here Bloom's warning that "the nationalist cry – 'this nation demands an independent state' – does not emerge as a natural expression of the nation. It emerges as the utterance of *certain particular political activists who already identify with the nation*." In agreement with him, I espouse that nationalism "has no intrinsic power to create any national identity. It may [...] harness a sense of national identity which already exists" (1990, 60-61; italics mine).

In the light of the theoretical approaches presented here, the purpose of this chapter is to examine the initial model of Ukrainian national identity articulation, or to put it in Bourdieu's terms, the initial conditions in which the Ukrainian national *habitus* was formed during the Romantic period. This is important because it provides the historical background that will allow me to elaborate the analysis of Ukrainian modernist practices as a form of subversive social ideology that pursued the modernization and further nationalization of Ukrainian society by proposing a type of Ukrainian national identity, different from the one, established during the romantic period. For the purposes of this study only, I refer to the period between 1790-1860 as the 'romantic period.' In the course of this half century, the modern Ukrainian literature was formed through the writings of authors such as Petro Hulak-Artemovs'kyi, Hryhorii Kvitka-Osnovianenko, Ievhen Hrebinka and the most prominent figure of Ukrainian Romanticism, the poet Taras Shevchenko. One of the most significant contributions of Ukrainian romantic writers, and above all, Shevchenko, was that they gradually came to realize the importance of literature as a means of

Ukrainian nation's unification. As Paul Magocsi writes, Shevchenko's works were very influential in introducing a shift in the ethnic self-perception of Ukrainians. He was definitely talking about a distinct Ukrainian identity, seeking political as well as cultural autonomy for the Ukrainian people. Thus, by means of his poetry a completely different principle, one of "mutually exclusive identities" (Magocsi 1996, 356) was popularized among intellectuals and speakers of Ukrainian.

2.1. Discovering the Essence of Ukrainian Identity

In the Ukrainian historical space, the concept of nation was adopted in the early 19th century as a collectivist notion that identified an imagined socio-historical entity: the Ukrainian 'People.' The self-ascription of power by the local elites, in particular the representatives of the Ukrainian creative intelligentsia, was a move that vested dignity into the actions of the Ukrainian nobility. According to the historian P. Magocsi, "the original motivation of those who contributed to the first, heritage-gathering stage of the national movement in Dnieper Ukraine, was not a desire for social innovation. Rather it was a desire to revive something from the past, or, more precisely, to use the past to acquire something in the present" (1996, 355). In the view of this scholar, after the Ukrainians were subjected to Russian imperial rule in 1785, when the last vestiges of Ukrainian statehood were destroyed, the local nobility in these territories, the so called Cossack *starshyna*, sought to obtain rights equal to those enjoyed by the Russian elite class (*dvorianstvo*). They sought to "justify the merits of specific requests that certain individual Cossacks were indeed of noble status according to local 'Little Russian' [Ukrainian] conditions" (Magosci 1996, 356). Both history and folkore became instrumental in the struggle to preserve one's high social status. Thus, as Magocsi insists, the practice of documenting local traditions, customs and rituals was central to the accumulation of evidence for the elite social status of Ukrainian nobility. This evidence was used to justify local models of domination and power relations, and therefore, it provided an indispensable means to substantiate the *starshyna* claims in front of the Russian imperial authority. Historical investigations, on the other hand, supplied the required hereditary rights and showed continuity in the hegemony of the Cossack elites over the peasant population in these areas (Magosci 1996, 356).

Despite the merit of Magosci's analysis, I think that his interpretation of the 'first stage' of Ukrainian nationalization is somewhat simplistic, as it does not account for the important culture building incentives of the initial patriotic activities. His observations are valid perhaps for the period preceding the Ukrainian intelligentsia's committed engagement in the processes of nation formation. Therefore, I suggest that the motivation of the patriotically oriented Ukrainian artistic intelligentsia differed somewhat from those of the *starshyna*. In my view, the Ukrainian writers from the first half of the 19th century were concerned predominantly with articulating the boundary of difference that enabled them to politicize Ukrainian ethnicity, thus empowering their resistance to the existing social divisions and hierarchies and respectively, indirectly challenging the established social order.[1] I argue that the social innovation, although implicit, was an essential part of the Ukrainian national project, as it involved both the articulation of Ukrainian distinctiveness and "the mobilization of the boundary of difference" in a pursuit of greater social and political interests (cf. Appadurai qt. in Jusdanis 2001, 19).

One of the most significant innovations that the intellectual practices and discursive imaginings of the first Ukrainian writers introduced was to give rise to the figure of the patriotic intellectual. A case in point is Rozumnyk Honors'kyi, the editor of *Ukrainski vestnik* (Ukrainian Herald, 1816-1819), who was among the first to express his patriotic sentiments, indicating the necessity of collective identification with the Ukrainian *ethnie* (cf. Smith 1999). As he clearly stated it, the purpose of this journal, was to provide information about the Ukrainian lands and their inhabitants, making the group known to the rest of the Empire as a distinctive local community, learned and successful in sustaining a unique lifestyle and ethnic character (Honors'kyi 1816 [1996], 26). Honors'kyi's discourse is interesting because it betrays the ambition of the Ukrainian intelligentsia to articulate its distinctions and mobilize Ukrainian cultural differences in a quest for recognition of its cultural-leadership rights. Thus, as I will show later, the Ukrainian writers asserted their symbolic power as participants in "the struggle over the monopoly of legitimate ideological production" (Bourdieu 1999, 168) by highlighting the function of Ukrainian culture as a means of social change and innovation (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 11).

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[1] Cf. similar interpretation in Myroslav Shkandrij, *Russia and Ukraine: Literature and the Discourse of Empire from Napoleonic to Postcolonial Times* (Montreal: MacGill-Queen's University Press, 2001).

This ascription of power was manifested in the increasing involvement with matters Ukrainian and the intensified engagement in debates over the linguistic and cultural distinctiveness of the Ukrainian 'People.' The majority of discourses articulated in the first half of the 19th century (the pre-Romantic and early Romantic writers from Galicia, such as Rozumnyk Honors'kyi, Oleksii Pavlovs'kyi, Hryhorii Kvitka-Osnovianenko, Markiian Shashkevych, Ivan Vahylevych, and others) suggest that the patriotic activities of the intelligentsia focused on outlining and expressing the reality of the linguistically distinguished group of Ukrainian speakers, defining it also as an ethnic community with indigenous folk traditions, customs and rituals. The language question then emerged as the dominant issue and throughout the entire 19th century remained the principle focus of Ukrainian writers' struggle for recognition (Shulman 1999, Yekelchyk 2001).

The reason why the first Ukrainian patriots were so interested in the issues of language, history and culture is to be found in what John Armstrong has identified as a typically Romanticist fascination with "the archaic, the traditional (or pseudo-traditional), and (in Europe) the peasant" (1995, 39). As the scholar remarks, this emphasis on language derived in part from "the romantic movement that endowed most nationalist ideologies with an aversion to rationalized programs and imbued adherents with contempt for rational planning as contrasted with self-sacrifice, 'heroism' and emphasis on will-power" (Armstrong 1995, 39). Rozumnyk Honors'kyi is a case in point. In his article devoted to the Cossacks and Bohdan Khmel'nytskyi (Honors'kyi 1817 [1996], 32-33), he communicated interesting thoughts regarding the incentive for documenting and writing about the past of the Ukrainian lands. His main motivation, as Honors'kyi suggested, was the need to find suitable role models to evoke national sentiments and a sense of group belonging in his targeted audience (educated, hybrid imperial elite). He found the tragic figure of Khmel'nytskyi particularly fit to serve this purpose and proceeded to 'construct' him as a national hero and an example of patriotism. "From the depth of our history, let us summon a man, who completely devoted himself to serving his country. Let [his image] be an everlasting reproach to those, who are indifferent and a prime example for the patriots!" wrote the editor of *Ukrainian Herald* in an attempt to create a very appealing tragic-heroic figure to evoke patriotic identification with the historical past of the Ukrainian community.[2] The romantic intellectual explicitly promoted Khmel'nytskyi as an example to follow because, as the writer admitted, the greatness of this Ukrainian historical character was manifested in his readiness to sacrifice himself in the name of the fatherland (Honors'kyi 1817 [1996], 33-34).

On the other hand, as careful examination of the argument developed by the early Ukrainian patriots reveals, such fascination with the Ukrainian spoken language, history and local traditions had an additional, more 'political' aspect to it. The first Ukrainian patriots attempted to define the 'people' in cultural terms (through the spoken language and vernacular traditions). They aspired to identify a culture in the Ukrainian demotic to fulfill the needs of all Ukrainian speakers, and eventually, to provide the basis for constructing a high local culture to identify the group as a distinctive ethnic community within the multiethnic imperial milieu. The argument developed by Izmail Sreznevs'kyi in his discourse on Ukrainian folk poetry is typical in this sense. As the prominent 19th century Ukrainian scholar declared in a letter to Professor Snegirev (Sreznevs'kyi 1834 [1996], 67-68), the Ukrainian language was not a dialect of the Russian language. It was a fully developed linguistic medium, the sole means for transmitting the historical and cultural legacy of the Ukrainian people ("*slava velykhyh liudei Ukrainy*"; Sreznevs'kyi 1834 [1996], 67). His vision of Ukrainian language as suitable for serving the communicative needs of Ukrainians on both sides of the Dnieper was, in my view, one of the earliest, most eloquent declarations in favor of the power of Ukrainian language as a unifying and identity defining principle (Sreznevs'kyi 1838 [1996], 65).

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[2] "Воззовем из мрака прошедших времен мужа, отдавшего всего себя на пользу отечества: пусть он будеть вечной укоризною беспечных и твердым назиданием бодрых!" (Honors'kyi 1817 [1996], 33-34).

The discourses of Ukrainian romantics feature both the Ukrainian spoken language and the traditional culture as a politicized ethnic identity (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 69). In other words, the Ukrainian intellectuals quickly become aware of the significance of culture as an institution of national signification conducive of social-political change. To be sure, I think that the Ukrainian romantics clearly recognized Ukrainian traditions as a source of greatness that not only enabled them to see themselves as separate from others, but also to accumulate cultural capital that eventually could be used in the political struggle for Ukrainian self-determination. By imbuing with symbolic power the Ukrainian spoken language and vernacular culture these were transformed into ideological weapons to defend, in the absence of modern structures, the cultural distinctiveness of the Ukrainian people.[3] In addition, as Joshua Fishman points out, the construction of the spoken language as a "beloved language," and the public discussion on issues of its orthography, grammar and standardization, reveal nationalist passions that originate "in the desire to endow the [demotic] with prestigious societal functions" (1996, 11) and thus, to establish Ukrainian language as 'the primordial' identity defining marker. The creation of a written Ukrainian language, therefore, became a central aspect of Ukrainian intelligentsia's culture-building and nation-building activities. In short, the central claims of the Romantic nationalist rhetoric, such as the claim for the 'uniqueness' of the spoken Ukrainian language[4] laid the foundation of the emerging nationalist ideology.

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[3] My interpretation here is inspired by ideas coming from Bourdieu (1999, 46-50; 57-61; 172-174) and Jusdanis (2001, 69).

However, it should be noted here that the Ukrainian nation-building process presents an interesting case because it deviates slightly from the models typically described in political theories of nationalism. From the point of view of such theories, the nation is born when the political and the cultural coincide (Gellner 1983, 1997). However, the circumstances in Ukraine demonstrate that the processes of nation-formation (or formulation) do not always derive from the principle congruence of the political and the cultural. The argument developed here takes into account that the political definition of the Ukrainian nation initially was not a necessity. Hence, Ukrainian nationalism in the early to mid-19th century evolved as an intellectual movement with a definite culture-building incentive.

The ultimate intellectual goal of the first Ukrainian patriots was to define the culture that would hold and unify the politically divided Ukrainian speakers by identifying a set of common cultural traits (national character) to provide the content of the collective (in-group) identity. Moreover, in the early 19th century the necessity to claim political rights was irrelevant as the historical conditions were favorable for the patriotic activities of the Ukrainian intelligentsia. During this 'first stage,' if one can make such a periodization, the Russian imperial government, as Magocsi writes, " […] provided a solid organizational basis for research into Ukrainian matters" (1996, 358). For example, in 1805 the first Ukrainian university was established in Kharkiv. Shortly after, in 1834, another one was founded in Kyiv. At that time, many Russian scholars and intellectuals became interested in Ukrainian vernacular culture. They found Ukrainian oral traditions fascinating, and wrote about the richness and beauty of Ukrainian folk songs and stories. Indeed, the Russian Prince Nikolai Tsertelev published in 1819 the first collection of Ukrainian folk songs, entitled *Opyt sobraniia malorossiiskikh pesnei* (An Attempt at a Collection of Ancient Little Russian Songs). In his preface, the Russian Prince indicated that the Ukrainian folk songs "exhibit a moral quality which sets them apart from the songs of their greedier and more aggressive neighbors [i.e., the Russians]" (Magocsi 1996, 356).

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[4] Mostly, this motif was developed as an argument defending the independent status of Ukrainian as a linguistic medium and the claim that the vernacular embodied the "people's spirit / soul." Cf. for example, Markiian Shashkevych's "*Frahment do chytatelia*" (Fragment to the Reader) where he wrote: "Язык – то є найчеснішим даром природи, […]. В нім являється душа народу, степінь його просвічення, глибина або міль його пристроювання природі її дийствам." (Language is the most valuable gift of nature; it reveals the soul of the nation, the level of its education, the depth or shallowness of its thoughts, its adjustment to nature and her actions; Shashkevych 1912, 148). In the mid-19th century, Mykola Kostomarov and Panteleimon Kulish voiced almost identical arguments (Kostomarov 1843, 194; Kulish 1857, 241). See also the following articles: Oleksii Pavlovs'kyi "*Hrammatyka Malorossiskoho narechyia*" (A Grammar of the Ukrainian Language 1818, 54-56); Markiian Shashkevych "*Azbuka i abetsadlo*" (Alphabet and the ABC's 1836, 144-46); Amvrosii Metlyns'kyi "*Zametki otnosno iuzhnorusskogo iazyka*" (Notes on the Ukrainian Language 1839, 138-41), and others. Page citations refer to the reprints in Fedchenko 1996.

The first Ukrainian patriots felt a strong need to express their cultural legacy and common identity in sophisticated artistic forms thereby engaging mostly in culture invention. One of the first techniques they employed in order to 'map' the boundaries of the emerging Ukrainian nation was the institutionalization of Ukrainian vernacular culture as the epitome of Ukrainian ethnicity and the essentialization of Ukrainian peasants (*Volk*) at the core of the collective identity. The belief that the spoken language embodied a distinctive native culture that expressed an indigenous local viewpoint of the world (*Weltanschauung*) provided the first Ukrainian patriots with a sound reason to pursue the collection of ethnographic evidence from the live oral traditions and customs, an activity that defined the nationalizing efforts in the course of the 19th century. In this respect, folklore research became one of the first 'programs' of national agitation to complement the collection of historical documents and the writing of the Ukrainian people's history as activities that allowed the first engineers of Ukrainian identity to discover the richness and beauty of their native land and culture. Moreover, it was used to support the efforts of those writing in the Ukrainian language to establish Ukrainian literature as a written tradition distinct from Polish and Russian, and therefore to invest the national enterprise with more symbolic power and prestige.

Clearly, this is what Kvitka-Osnovianenko's critical discourses suggest to me. In his "Letter to the editors of *Russkii vestnik*," the Ukrainian writer expressed his discontent with the accusations that his writings have a very limited audience, and even those who read his Ukrainian stories, were gradually becoming indifferent to what he had to say (Kvitka 1849 [1996], 81). In his eloquent defense, Kvitka admitted that he started to write because he wanted to "prove to a non-believer that the Ukrainian language had the power to convey subtle and touching emotions."[5] He argued that it was best to write about the people and life familiar to the author, describing ingenious experiences and events. "I do not like and do not want to imitate [other writers' styles]. Thus I follow no one. I do not represent 'foreign' people in my stories; I do not describe nor explain the past because I did not live then. I write about my experiences [...]. One cannot please every reader, and I write to please myself."[6] The Ukrainian writer articulated similar thoughts in a letter to Piotr Pletniov, dated March 15, 1839, where he confessed: "I always will write in the Ukrainian [language] [...] Dear Piotr Aleksandrovich, please try to understand the essential difference between our two idioms: the Russian and the Ukrainian. [Words] that in the

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[5] "Чтобы доказать одному неверующему, что на малороссийском языке можно писать нежное, трогательное" (Kvitka 1849 [1996], 78).

[6] "Подражать не люблю и не хочу, и потому-то не лезу за другими на литературные подмостки. [...] Заграничных людей в свои повести не беру, излагать и объяснять старину не пускаюся: я не жил тогда. А пишу, что

Ukrainian language would be expressive, melodious, and fluent in the Russian sound lifeless, harsh, and plain."[7] In this line of thought, Kvitka was even more explicit in defining his subject matter and interest in his native culture. In another letter to Pletniov (April 26, 1839), the writer admitted that his authorial intention always had been to portray the Ukrainian lifestyle, upbringing, traditions, and so on (*opisat' malorossiiskuiu zhizn', i vospitanie, i obriady, i proch., i proch.* [...]; Kvitka 1839b [1996], 93).

Kvitka's patriotic rhetoric, therefore, suggests that the first Ukrainian writers were most concerned with establishing a national readership and expanding the market for Ukrainian cultural goods. More importantly, it seems to me that the rhetoric of the nation was used to 'construct' a social reality in which the Ukrainian speakers, primarily peasants, lived their life. Again, as Calhoun explains, the power of nationalism is so pervasive partly because "national identities and the whole rhetoric of nationalism appear commonly to people as though they were always already there, ancient or even natural" (1997, 12). The primordialist claims of Ukrainian romantics expressed in the respective 'myths' of ethnic uniqueness (e.g., Kostomarov's *Knyha Bytiia Ukrainskoho narodu* [*The Book of Genesis of Ukrainian People*]), such as the myth of the chosen people, attempted to ensure the ethnic community's continued existence in space and time, conveying the "phenomenological experience of ordinary people that the 'nation' has been already always there" (cf. Calhoun 1997, 30). In short, the 19th century Ukrainian patriots sought to 'revive' the collective memory by discovering it in the everyday life, ritual practices and oral lore of the *Volk* (peasants). In this manner, the first engineers of Ukrainian national identity

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встретится меня. [...] За всеми не угоняешься; пиши по-своему" (Kvitka 1849 [1996], 81).

[7] "[...] всегда буду сбиваться на свой тон, малороссийский. [...] Притом, почтеннейший Петр Александрович, потрудитесь вникнуть в видимую разницу наших – ну именно языков русского и малороссийского, что на одном будет сильно, звучно, гладко, то на другом не произведет никакого действия, холодно, сухо" (Kvitka 1839a [1996], 89-90).

engaged in the naturalization of Ukrainian nation, i.e., they made it seem primeval.

During the romantic period, and due to the work of the intellectuals at that time, the tradition-based forms of artistic expression such as songs, tales, personal stories, legends, etc., became subjects of systematic collection and documentation. The recorded folk items were 'packed' into fixed written texts, and published in special collections and journals.[8] The evident purpose of this enterprise, as Michael Herzfeld has pointed with respect to folkloristics in Greece, was to address "what perhaps were the most sensitive aspects of national identity" (1982, 7). Thus, it was during the romantic period that Ukrainian folklore became established both as a scholarly discipline and as a particular national 'tradition.' The items of this 'constructed' tradition were additionally endowed with high value, as these were perceived to be the expressions of an authentic Ukrainian culture. They showed both its richness and historical longevity. Because of this, the artifacts of Ukrainian folklore were conceived as the manifestation of people's ethnic identity.

Furthermore, for the first patriotic intellectuals, it was important to define those cultural characteristics, which were to give substance to the emerging nation, focusing on identifying the features that united the inhabitants of both Eastern and Western Ukraine. Clearly then, they assisted the essentialization of a cultural identity that derived its commonalities from the same source (i.e., the Ukrainian spoken language and traditional culture), hence providing the key elements of Ukrainian distinctiveness by identifying those "cultural and ancestral bonds" that they perceived as making Ukrainian nation natural and primordial (cf.

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[8] Mykhailo Maksymovych published the first systematic assemblage of Ukrainian folk songs in 1827. In this collection, the scholar, as Prince Tsertelev before him, stressed the differences between the Ukrainians and the Russians by comparing their folk songs. This, and the other two collections of Maksymovych, which were respectively published in 1834 and 1849, had an immense impact on Ukrainian intellectuals, who, as Magocsi asserts, "sought to discover the riches of their people's indigenous culture" (1996, 356).

Jusdanis 2001, 26). For them, this task was an imperative too. Due to the influence of the German romantic philosophy, the first Ukrainian patriots modeled the national identity on the basis of a common language (Ukrainian demotic), history (a master-narrative according to which the inhabitants of both Left and Right Bank Ukraine were the descendants of Kyivan Rus' and the Cossacks) as well as what they perceived as similarities in values, beliefs, customs and traditions, preserved and expressed in the living oral lore of the Ukrainian *Volk* (peasantry). In this sense, the issue important for us to address is not whether these cultural commonalities existed but how they were constantly constructed, negotiated and renegotiated, and continuously called into action by nationalist leaders and ideologues (cf. Calhoun 1997, 32).

As Stephan Shulman (1999) and many others have argued, national identity "emerges from the recognition of the commonality among the members of a nation and both the commonality and differences between the nation and others." It seems that the comparisons the first Ukrainian patriots began to make stirred up a desire to 'construct' boundaries with the neighboring cultures by maintaining and expressing a deeply felt need for self-esteem. This need, as their writings suggest, forced them to seek and interpret their common cultural traits as a unifying (in-group, interconnecting condition), and respectively, to insist on the recognition of their ethnic distinctiveness within the imperial context. This was also their main motivation to engage in the process of culture-formation and ethnic demarcation.

Again, Kvitka-Osnovianenko's critical writings and letters offer an excellent example. His self-revelations demonstrate the complexity of his motivation to write in the Ukrainian language. Besides the utilitarian purpose of satisfying the needs of the Ukrainian-speaking readership, which he expressed in a letter to Mykhailo Maksymovych from October 3, 1839 (Kvitka 1839c [1996], 93-95), one also detects between the lines of his other critical writings the author's latent desire to be acknowledged and respected as a writer. Because he was not a very successful writer in Russian, it is likely that the popularity his Ukrainian short stories and novellas brought him also gratified his secret need to be a distinguished author. By the same token, noteworthy is Kulish's critical note expressed in the epilogue to his historical novel *The Rabble's Council* (hereafter *Epilogue*). Here he wrote:

> In fact, it should be noted: none of the Ukrainian writers, including Gogol, had felt content while writing in the Russian language. Each one of them had known the alarming feeling that he had not fulfilled his obligation because his works *were worthless to his compatriots*. Indeed, such works were not as powerful as was the literature written in the writer's native [Ukrainian] language, the sacred language in which his mother has imparted to him [basic] moral principles and virtues.[9]

From this perspective, the Ukrainian romantic intelligentsia essentialized the Ukrainian vernacular culture as the principle container of Ukrainian distinctiveness. Hence, the collected folk items were used to set the foundation of an emerging Ukrainian national culture. By means of folklore collection, the images of 'rural life' and 'the peasantry' were contrived in order to evoke strong patriotic feelings and a sense of belonging, or as Foster has put it in general, "a timeless and natural connection of 'the people' to the land" (cf. 1991, 234). In this regard, the first engineers of Ukrainian national identity worked to ensure the community's cultural independence and cohesiveness as a distinct ethnic group in the context of the Russian and Austrian empires. By means of such collection and subsequent commodification through publication in journals and books, now these folklore items became available on the market, and were used to communicate Ukrainian cultural differences.

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[9] Правда, оно заманчиво: но только ни один из малороссийских поэтов – в том числе даже и Гоголь – не был удовлетворен своими сочинениями на языке севернорусском. У каждого из них всегда оставалось на душе томительное сознание, что он не исполнил своего назначения *принести пользу ближнему*, и действительно не принес ее в той мере, в какой родное слово приносит пользу родному сердцу [...] – на том священном языке на которого мать внушала ему правила честности и добродетели (Kulish 1857 [1996], 253; author's italics).

2.2. Constitution of Folk Culture as the National Heritage: The Demotic Model of National Identity

Liah Greenfeld has maintained that nationalism, not industrialization was the constitutive element of modern society. The renowned Canadian theorist maintains that in the study of nationalism, investigation of the orientations that transformed the nature of social actions and defined modern society as "a historical individual, located in time and space, and contingent on possibly unique historical circumstances rather than predetermined" is of utmost importance. The scholar also insists that, "the concept of 'nation' as 'an elite' was a result of a long series of transformations which combined structural and semantic elements" (1996b, 11-12). She persuasively argues that "the formation of an egalitarian conception of social order and the related collectivization of authority" were the nuts and bolts of modernization. As she suggests, "nationalism, in turn, evolved as the principal ideology to accomplish this task" (Greenfeld 1996b, 9). In the scholar's view, it was "a response of individuals affected by dysfunctions of the society of orders – the traditional structure modern society replaced – to the sense of disorder they created" (Greenfeld 1996b, 9-10).

The second half of the 19th century saw a change in the political treatment of Ukrainian intelligentsia and the emerging national culture. After the enforcement of the Valuev decree in 1863 and the Ems ukaz in 1876, publications in the Ukrainian language on the territory of the Russian Empire were banned because by then Ukrainian ethnic self-identification became associated with peasant dissatisfaction and revolts against colonial economic oppression. The Russian government began seeing in these attempts a form of political separatism, and reacted harshly with repressive and discriminatory measures. The organizations of Ukrainian intellectuals were demobilized. Many of the members were sent to exile. In short, as Magocsi summarizes, "the national movement was basically forced to lie dormant during the last decades of the nineteenth century (1996, 376).

As the Ukrainian intelligentsia's discourses from that time suggest, the repressive measures of the Russian imperial administration required a different type of reaction. The writings of intellectuals such as Mykola Kostomarov, Panteleimon Kulish, Mykhailo Drahomanov, and later Serhii Iefremov and Ivan Franko, directly articulate a different need for 'essentializing' the nation, and respectively, a different conception of the 'people.' The budding historical consciousness, discovery of the glorious past substantiated the Ukrainian intelligentsia's claims for participation in the social structures of the absolutist state while simultaneously producing an inventory of specific historical markings that determined the symbolic domain of the imagined Ukrainian nation. Such activities became the first form of manipulation of communal sentiments. Together with the gathering of ethnographic materials, which grew to be an activity providing the "potent reinforcement for the Romantic exaltation of the peasantry" (cf. Armstrong 1995, 39), such intellectual pursuits enforced a particular form of self-representation. It allowed – as Gourgouris has pointed out for the Greeks – for the social imagination "to institute its own *People*." The Greek scholar has emphasized the significance of this fact by claiming that the notion of 'people' became "the unifying signifier through which a nation can be identified as such, which is to say, can render its geographical presence palpable [...]" (Gourgouris 1996, 18; author's italics).

Similarly to the earlier patriots, the psychological need for self-esteem motivated the late 19th century Ukrainian intelligentsia's desire to establish and maintain boundaries with the neighboring ethnic groups of the Russians and the Poles. Panteleimon Kulish was one of the most eager and articulate defenders of this exigency. In his *Epilogue*, the author, with resentment and anger, notes the increasing threat to the Ukrainian language, literature and culture. As he points out, he wrote this historical novel because he felt compelled to reveal "[...] the reasons for the political disenfranchisement of Ukraine, and to prove to every doubting mind, not through a scholarly thesis, but through the artistic reincarnation of the *forgotten* and *thwarted* […] past that Ukrainians and Russians need to unite and form a single state."[10] The writer expresses his strong love for the Ukrainian people and pride in his culture, arguing that

> […] The people who joined the Muscovite state in the 17th century were not minor. The majority of Ukrainians were persons of strong character, prideful, and conscious of their human dignity. In their mentality and conduct, the Ukrainians have nurtured and still nurture the highest civil principles. These people offered to Russia many progressive and enthusiastic individuals, whose contributions to the development of Russian statehood were indeed significant. Finally, the Ukrainians enriched the ethnically and linguistically akin group of the Russians with their distinctive and elegant language. The unique features of the Ukrainian idiom will contribute to the maturation of the Russian literature and language, i.e., the intellectual resources that mark the evolution of [the imperial] historical community and serve to measure its contributions to the development of human civilization.[11]

As Kulish's discourse suggests, the prominence given to linguistic differences at that time was a popular technique for 'mapping' the Ukrainian ethnic boundaries. In addition, it was utilized as a tool for demanding recognition of Ukrainian contributions to the building of the imperial multiethnic high culture, which also meant an acknowledgement of Ukrainian intelligentsia's high status as the cultural leadership of the emerging nation. Again, Kulish articulated this clearly. Espousing a typically romantic view on the uniqueness of the writer's

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[10] "[…] причины политического ничтожество Малороссии, и каждому колеблющемуся уму, доказать, не диссертациею, а худжественным воспроизведиенем *забытой* и *исскаженной* […] старины, нравственную необходимость слияния в одно государство южнорусского племени с северным" (Kulish 1857 [1996], 255; author's italics).

[11] […] не ничтожны народ присоединился в половине XVII века к московскому царству. Он большею частию состоял из характеров самостоятельных, гордых сознанием своего человеческого достойнство: он, в своих нравах и понятиях, хранил и хранит до сих пор начала висшей гражданственности; он придал России множество новых, энергических деятелей, которых влияние немало способствовало развитию государственной силы русского народа; он, наконець, пришел в единоплеменную и единоверную ему Россию с языком, богатым собственно ему принадлежащими достойнствами, которые в будущем, своенародном образовании литературы должны усовершенствовать орган русского чувтсво и русской мысли, – этот великий орган, по степени развития которого ценятся историею народы (Kulish 1857 [1996], 255).

'voice,' he asserted that originality was the most valuable and inspiring quality of true literature. He affirmed that such an original authorial voice was both 'personal' and 'public.' As Kulish advocated, there was a close relationship between the chosen medium of expression (Ukrainian language) and the writer's creative imagination for a writer simultaneously expressed both individuality and collectivity as he "[possesed] a unique language [style] that [was] particularly apt to express his unique mental and emotional experiences."[12]

In Kulish's view, Kvitka was the prime example of such an original and culturally specific author because it was extremely difficult "to translate his Ukrainian conceptions (*malorossiiskie kontseptsii*) into the Russian language (*na russkom iazyke*)." According to the Ukrainian intellectual's profound understanding, it was impossible to separate the artist's language from the subject matter it expressed. He claimed that otherwise the harmony would be disrupted and the translation would render a poor approximation to the original. "If you translate [Kvitka's] stories in the language of another writer, most of their beauty will be lost," remarked Kulish, thereby further enforcing the distinction between the Russian and the Ukrainian language (1857, 249). He further argued that, "It [was] not a matter of linguistic differences, but a matter of a *distinctive native character*, which [was] manifested always in the expression of ideas, feelings, and the movements of the [artist's] soul." "Neither of these," Kulish reasoned, "can be expressed in a language, foreign to the author."[13]

In this sense, the linguistic and cultural claims of Ukrainian patriots were used as 'political tools.' The Ukrainian scholar Serhy Yekelchyk expresses a similar view. In an article on the construction of high Ukrainian culture in the

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[12] "[…] имеет свой особенный язык, которой только и хорош для того взгляда на жизнь, для того склада ума, для тех движениях сердца, которые одному ему свойнственные" (Kulish 1857 [1996], 249).

[13] "[…] Дело тут не в одной разности яыков; дело в *особенностях внутренней природы*, которые на каждом шагу оказываются в способе выражения мыслей, чувств, движений души, и которые на языке, не природному автору, выразиться не могут" (Kulish 1857 [1996], 254; italics mine).

Russian Empire, he writes: "The Ukrainian intelligentsia in the Russian Empire [...] claim[ed] they were only reviving their nation's culture, while in fact they were creating a new one." As the scholar further observes, "[...] the significance of the Ukrainian intelligentsia's cultural work was unprecedented because the tsarist government suppressed not only the Ukrainian political and social movements, but also the language, literature, education, and scholarship." In this sense, it is important, as he emphasizes, to understand that the culture-building work of the Ukrainian intelligentsia throughout the entire 19th century was not a "pre-political" stage for as he points out, both the attitude of the intelligentsia and the reaction of the imperial administration, "confirmed that the culture-building *was* a political enterprise" (2001, 211; author's italics). As he goes on to explain, and I fully agree with his view, "due to the tsarist repressions against any form of organized Ukrainian life [especially, since the second half of the 19th century], the local intelligentsia particularly appreciated the need to constitute a nation discursively, remaining at the stage of 'imagining' the nation during a time when other peoples in East-Central Europe saw their nationalisms developing into mass movements" (Yekelchyk 2001, 211).

Under the conditions of oppressive absolutist regimes, Ukrainian writers and literary critics, being the first designers of Ukrainian national identity, engaged primarily in what the eminent scholar of nationalism Miroslav Hroch has referred to as "the formation of the image of the 'fatherland' as a psycho-geographical fact" (1995, 70). In this way, they opened the possibility for national agitation. Once again, one of the most clearly articulated ethnic claims is found in the writings of Kulish, who as early as the late 1850s, recognized the need for identifying the Russians and the Poles as "dissimilar strangers" (Shulman 1999). In his *Epilogue*, the Ukrainian writer suggested that creating linguistic and cultural boundaries with the Russians and the Poles was crucial due to the oppressive attitudes of both neighboring ethnic groups as well as their apparent differences from the Ukrainian people in both language and culture (Kulish 1857

[1996], 241). The patriotically mindful intellectual argued that those, who "limit[ed] the study of the people and their language [and by extension culture] to the *so-called true Russians*, neglecting in their blindness the millions of Ukrainians, who also [partook] in the movement for self-discovery and self-determination, [acted] against the success of the Russian state's moral advancement."[14] As a result, he saw the promotion of Ukrainian literature and culture as a moral obligation and the only way to build relationships of respect and collaboration between the two nations.

In this text he also re-assesses Gogol's literary reputation and acknowledges his role as a cultural ambassador whose writings re-connected the Russian and the Ukrainian culture, for a long time divided by "ancient misunderstandings and lack of mutual respect" (*razronennykh starymi nedorazumeniiami i nedostatkom vzaimnoi otsenki*; Kulsih 1857 [1996], 244). As he urged, the patriotic duty of Ukrainian writers was to produce literature in the Ukrainian language not only because it was the only appropriate medium to convey the unique Ukrainian outlook but because it was the only language to address the Ukrainian audience and incite common patriotic sentiments and human pride. He insisted that,

> When we talk about the highest aspirations of the human spirit, quantity is irrelevant. Rather, it is a matter of the quality of the 'soil' where we plant our words. It is a matter of our ability to captivate our audience's mind and heart. If you were able to soothe the inner turmoil of a single person with inspiring stories about the triumph of the human spirit, you will do a greater good in the eyes of God and the people than if you offer to a mass readership an entertaining and delightful but pointless reading.[15]

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[14] "[...] ограничивают круг изучения народа и его речи так называемым *настоящим русским человеком*, отчуждая, в слепоте своей, от участия в деле самопознания и самовыражения многие миллионы южного русского племени, – и действуют против успехов нравственного развития России" (Kulish 1857 [1996], 242; author's italics).

[15] "Не в количество дело, когда речь идет о высоких преданиях души человеческой: дело в качестве почвы, на которою падает наше слово, дело в той силе, с которою оно поражает умы и сердца слушателей. Успокой всепобеждающим вдохновением речи одного человека в тяжких сомнениях о

Thus, Kulish's writings began revealing a different attitude towards the Ukrainian nation. Implicitly or explicitly engaging in the formulation of Ukrainian cultural nationalism as ideology affirming the originality of the culture Ukrainian patriots labored to create, the apparent purpose of such statements, in my view, was to enhance the significance of Ukrainian culture as a source of pride and dignity.[16]

In this context, the idea of a 'homeland' became instrumental in the articulation of a Ukrainian national identity. As Calhoun has argued, the image of the 'homeland' "encourages an identification with one's nation that makes it attractive to think of it as superior because that implies a certain superiority for oneself" (cf. 1997, 19). In the Ukrainian context, even a quick glance at how the poet Taras Shevchenko was constituted as both 'the national poet' and the exemplary Ukrainian patriot can illustrate the work of the romantic nationalist imagination thereby revealing also its attempts to 'construct' an appealing mythopoetic image of the 'homeland' Ukraine.

According to Calhoun, "when the work of a writer, or a painter, or a composer is presented as embodying the spirit of the nation, this is different from presenting it as the work of a rootless genius or cosmopolitan citizen of the world" (cf. 1997, 22). In his view, the nationalist rhetoric in such instances does not just aim at explaining why a particular event or a person has national significance but "helps to constitute each through cultural framing" (cf. Calhoun 1997, 22). It works to heighten the sense of group cohesion based on a shared

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бессмертий души человеческой, подними одного ближнего из разврата чувств и понятий, – и ты сделаешь больше заслуги перед богом и перед людьми, нежели если б доставил легкое и приятное, но бесплодное чтение многочисленному обществу" (Kulish 1857 [1996], 254).

[16] Cf. Jusdanis's discussion on the significance of national culture as a source of pride and dignity (2001, 71-101). In agreement with Max Weber, the scholar concedes that such significance is clearly "anchored in the superiority or at least the irreplaceability of the culture values that are to be preserved and developed only through the cultivation of the peculiarity of one group" (Jusdanis 2001, 34).

membership in a particular history and life-world inasmuch as it "highlights the capacity of culture to serve as a means for political action, and ultimately, social change" (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 11).

Shevchenko's 'embedded-ness' in a Ukrainian culture that was geographically tangible and chronologically continuous proved the potential of Ukrainianness as a source of solidarity and mutual obligation. Hence, he was traditionally perceived to be the first 'to construct' and represent the wholeness of the Ukrainian ethnoscape as a highly suggestive and pervasive mytho-poetic image. The image of the homeland, as it emerged in his lyrical musings, offered a powerful national symbol. Perhaps, the reason for this was that of all the Romantics, Shevchenko alone produced the most elaborate and emotionally charged articulation of the national destiny. His poetry recast the Ukrainian people's historical path in a deeply emotional language and expressive rhetoric that heavily accentuated the closeness of Shevchenko's style to traditional aesthetic expressions. In his lyrical representations, the tragedy of Ukraine (the motherland) issued from the gradual destruction of its people, a sensitive and humane society that was doomed to suffer under the rule of foreign oppressors. In this sense, the intensely personal and heartfelt language of his discourse, permeated with kinship and family imagery and symbolism (widows, orphans, raped maidens are key symbols in his lyrical musings), aimed at evoking most of all a sense of empathy and discontent in the reader, who witnessed the stoical sacrifice of the Ukrainian people in the face of historical misfortunes. Most of all, Shevhenko's nationalist rhetoric manipulated feelings of both shame and pride, seeking to express in their sharp juxtaposition the tension involved in adequately expressing the 'national character' and the ambivalence and counterbalance of weakness and glory, vulnerability and resistance in the Ukrainian nation's historical existence. In addition, Shevchenko's poetry rendered the common intellectual and emotional grievances in a rhetoric that powerfully re-shaped the very basis of individual and collective self-perception. To conclude, his rhetoric emphasized social solidarity as found in "a long-standing ethnic identity, local community networks, and claimed connections to ancestral territory" (cf. Calhoun 1997, 29).

Anthony Smith is a contemporary theorist, who persistently has argued that the concept of 'ancestral land' is pivotal for the inculcation of national sentiments. In his view, "only an ancestral homeland can provide the emotional as well as psychological security required by the citizens of a nation" (1999, 149). In this sense, the writings of the Ukrainian romantics transformed the territory into a 'homeland,' an image that invoked particular psychological and emotional attachments (through feelings of empathy, pity, pride, etc). Perhaps, as suggested previously, one reason why Shevchenko was canonized as the 'national poet' is that he offered the most appealing image of the homeland Ukraine as an abstract mytho-poetic symbol, yet geographically concrete and recognizable area where a distinctive Ukrainian culture has been shaped since ancient times.[17] Respectively, his biography and work find prominent place in the national myth, and the poet himself, was 'invented' as a cultural hero and an exemplary model of a Ukrainian patriot. In this way, Shevchenko's vision of the Ukrainian nation constitutes "a crucial source of cultural content, emotional commitment, and organizational strength" (cf. Calhoun 1997, 129). Thus, the poet was revered because of his uncompromising patriotic position.

His contemporaries, such as Kostomarov and Kulish, applauded Shevchenko's deep-seated sense of cultural belonging expressed in his strong attachments to the Ukrainian land and people (Kostomarov 1860, 1881 and Kulish

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[17] Cf. also Grabowicz (1982). In my view, Kulish historical fiction, as well as Kostomarov's scholarly study of Ukrainian history, mythology, folklore, and literature served analogous purposes. For the Ukrainian nationalists, this was one of the most important tasks, and the study, publication and revival of Ukrainian folklore provided a good opportunity to create 'imaginary' unity based on language, history, and common, but not shared, living oral traditions. Interestingly enough, the Ukrainian intellectuals from that period accepted and emphasized regional differences as part of the policy of national unification.

1857, 251-252). As Kostomarov and Kulish's discourses suggest, his lyrics unquestionally elevated the symbolic value of the Ukrainian language, history and vernacular traditions while his patriotic passion provided the core of the Ukrainian romatic nationalist rhetoric. In short, Shevchenko's patriotic vision as expressed in his poetry, had an integrative function and manifested the desire of the Ukrainian patriotic intelligentsia to create a number of narratives that by means of their powerful and emotionally charged messages would ensure the Ukrainian nation's consolidation. For this reason, Shevchenko's patriotic ideology was used later as a caliper to measure up the growth of Ukrainian cultural nationalism (Grabowicz 1982; Magosci 1996).

In the course of the 19th century, the romantic and later populist literature incorporated the traditions of Western and Eastern Ukrainians by discovering their closeness and intimate relationship. As a result, the Ukrainian vernacular culture (both as ethnographically documented, revived folk culture and as a system of thriving tradition-based everyday practices and knowledge) was recognized as a national cultural heritage common to all Ukrainians. Shevchenko was celebrated as the national poet, and his works were equally appreciated on both sides of Dnieper. I tend to think that Ukrainian romantic literature created the realm of shared experiences and sentiments to give substance to the emerging Ukrainian national culture by providing vivid descriptions of the Ukrainian historical past and peasant life. Shevchenko's poetry, moreover, proved beyond a doubt that the Ukrainian language possessed the expressive powers and abilities of an indigenous linguistic system. Thus, in his poetry the Ukrainian demotic was transformed into a full-fledged linguistic medium for the enunciation of a distinctive psyche and mentality. For these reasons, the romantic literature, and most of all Shevchenko's poetry, became instrumental in the articulation of Ukrainian cultural differences and the forging of Ukrainian ethnic identity.[18]

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[18] It should be noted, however, that Ukrainian vernacular culture was not the only source of influence. Cultural production from Western Europe entered Ukrainian

Furthermore, toward the end of the 19th century the growth of a written tradition in the spoken Ukrainian language, and the establishment of a literary cannon, i.e., the maturation of modern Ukrainian literature complemented the collecting of folklore and ethnographic and historical research as means of defining the boundaries of a bourgeoning nationality. The process of establishing the national literary canon is detectable in the gradual accumulation of critical reflections on Ukrainian literature, which demonstrate a shift in the conceptualization of its role as a social institution. The continuity of literary tradition is established through careful examinations of the 'new' and the 'old' production, hence outlining its history. The criteria for including authors into the canon seem at first to be 'ethnic' rather than aesthetic. In my view, the purpose of review articles such as Kostomarov's "*Obzor sochinenii* ..." (1843 [1996], 194-211) and Kulish's critical analyses is to mark the continuity of Ukrainian literature's development leading to the current period. In additon, these overviews affirmed Ukrainian literature as a means to 'construct' and bring alive the history of the 'people,' securing in this way its significance as a vital part of the contemporary historical consciousness and cultural identity.[19] It is also worth mentioning that later histories of literature and review articles such as Drahomanov's "*Literatura Ukrains'ka,* ..." (1873), the writings of Iefremov, Nechui-Levytskyi, Hrinchenko and Franko not only continued the process of

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territories in the form of translations, and the principle intermediaries in this form of cultural contact were Polish and Russian romantic authors. Moreover, Ukrainian intellectuals were acquainted with the classical European heritage represented by the literary traditions of Ancient Greek and Rome. This cultural heritage was now rediscovered and re-incorporated into the Ukrainian cultural space through satirical and humorous adaptations of the classics, a practice that also expressed a reaction to one's own legacy.

[19] Cf. Jusdanis 1991, 49-66, for clues with respect to the theoretical model informing my interpretation of the processes of canon formation in both Ukraine and Bulgaria. However, here I would refrain from further exploring this particular issue since my interests are not, strictly speaking, 'literary.' Being more concerned with issues of culture change and exchange, I prefer to limit myself to the eclectic interdisciplinary cultural approach proposed in my introduction.

creating the literary canon, but also clearly spelled out the distinctiveness of the Ukrainian people. As the major argument goes, Ukrainian literature had the right to exist independently, striving to represent the rich cultural heritage of Ukrainian speakers by addressing its readership in a language that was the single, most adequate medium to express, in sophisticated and emotionally appealing narratives, the native world outlook and 'voice.' The emphasis put on the social and educational function of literature, which was conceived as a 'mirror of life,' suggested that literature was viewed as instrumental in the promotion of an egalitarian model of ethnic identification whose major objective was to invent a national culture on the basis of Ukrainian vernacular culture and history. In other words, the Ukrainian romantics and their successors, the realists-populists, espoused a model of cultural self-definition that fashioned Ukrainian identity on the premise that the Ukrainian peasantry constituted the core of the nation. Respectively, the nation was essentialized as a 'natural' and continuous genealogical community in which one is born, and nationalism was extolled as a 'mass phenomenon.' In short, both the romantics and the realists-populists endorsed the 'collective' rather than the individual experience of the nation. This is significant because it reveals an aspect of the Ukrainian intellectuals' dispositions toward the national question (i.e., *habitus*), which the Ukrainian modernists would fervently strive to change.

As previously mentioned, since the mid-19th century, the Ukrainian intelligentsia began entertaining different versions of what would constitute the Ukrainian nation. Partly, as a reaction to the repressive measures of the colonial administration, a number of 'ethnic' nationalist ideologies slowly evolved. Crucial in all debates about the 'content' of the emerging nation were the questions of culture and roots. As Foster maintains, the self-conscious creation and dissemination of representations of the nation inevitably "entail[s] contest among competing interests and not merely a 'choice' – rational or otherwise – made by cultural policy makers" (cf. 1991, 239). The debates over the essence of the national culture provide "privileged insight into the ideological processes of selection, revision and invention through which competing agents simultaneously construct idealized images of the nation (as well as of authority) and press local political claims" (cf. Foster 1991, 239).

By the end of the 19th century, the Ukrainian patriotic intelligentsia proposed two different models of national culture. One spelled out a notion of people with a peasant identity and traditional culture based on strong familial and kinship relations and sought to create national culture 'for the masses.' The other model was more elitist in its nature, and initially was quite unpopular. It insisted on the dominant place of Ukrainian intelligentsia as a social group and publicized its values and beliefs as central to the cultural experience of Ukrainian nationhood. In this sense, this 'anti-demotic' model sought the 'roots' of Ukrainian national identity in a common high culture that absorbed, but was not identical with the Ukrainian vernacular culture.

According to the 'demotic' conceptual model, the rural roots provided the foundation of the Ukrainian cultural identity. The Ukrainian scholar, Solomea [Solomiia] Pavlychko, associates the 'demotic' complex of ideas with the cultural practices of Ukrainian populists at the end of the 19th century, therefore identifying it as a "traditional-populist" model (1996, 84). However, I consider its intellectual genesis to be the discursive work of Mykola Kostomarov. In articles such as "*Dve russkie narodnosti*" (Two Russian Nationalities), "*Pravda Poliakam o Rusi*" (The Truth to the Poles about Rus'), "*Pravda Moskvycham o Rusi*" (The Truth to the Muscovites about Rus'), and others, he articulated the main principles of the 'demotic' vision of the Ukrainian nation. By asserting the historical rights of Ukrainian peasants as bearers of a distinctive cultural identity, he placed them at the core of the Ukrainian nation, thus favoring the creation of a public (mass) national culture to meet their intellectual and aesthetic needs.

One of the most important texts in which Kostomarov elaborated the late romantic concept of 'the people' is his review of Ukrainian literature, published in

1843 in the almanac *Molodik.* In this text the scholar identified Ukrainian peasants as the embodiment of the national character. As he asserted, the Ukrainian identity was a distinctive category that reinforced tolerance to the Russian imperial nationality. “Indeed,” wrote Kostomarov, “the national idea that propelled the development of Russian literature has triggered also the creation of a distinctive literary tradition within its context, Ukrainian literature, which in orientation is truly indigenous […] [though still a part of the imperial cultural production].”[20] In a typically romantic manner, the critic viewed Ukrainian literature as a social institution to serve the nationalizing efforts of Ukrainian intelligentsia, whose heartfelt desires to express their distinctive identity in a language that was able to convey their idiosyncratic and ethnically specific vision of the world, became more acute.

> When in Europe the idea of a nation was conceived, the imitative and rigid academic art became original and talented. The Russians (who quickly capture all that is available) adopted this idea and discovered in themselves ample resourses for its implementation. We [the Ukrainians] also started to be ashamed of our indifference towards the native and our irresponsible attachment to the foreign. We realized that despite the huge amount of books, we had no literature and we resorted to our own resources of nationality (*natsional'nost*) and ethnicity (*narodnost*)…
>
> Tastes changed and with that the language also changed. The foreign forms that were imposed on our native language by a thwarted understanding of elegance, gave way to the indigenuous forms of the native idiom, refined through its various uses by the educated classes. Literature also changed. Its main impetus became not the effort to imitate the foreign, but the [desire to re-create the] unique native [forms]. [21]

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[20] “Итак, идея народности, подвинувшая вперед русскую литературу, произвела в ней особенный отдел – литературу малороссийскую, которая по направлению своему есть чисто русская, своенародная” (Kostomarov 1843 [1996], 196).

[21] “Когда в Европе явилась идея народности, подражательность уступила оригинальности, а школьность – таланту; русские, хватая с жадностью все, что ни попадалось по руку, усвоили себе и эту идею и нашли у себя богатые силы для осуществления ее; мы начали стыдиться своего ровнодушия к отечественному и безотчетной привязанности к чуждестранному; мы увидели, что не смотря на количество книг, у нас нет литературы, и обратились к собственному источнику национальности и

Thus, the scholar identified the identity-securing function of Ukrainian literature as its primary function. In his view, the representations of peasant life and the 'authentic' (realistic) fictional characters that Ukrainian writers strove to create were of utmost importance for the fostering of national sentiments and enforcing a sense of 'ethnic' belonging that infused the common identity. Engaging in the canonization of Ukrainian authors, Kostomarov commented on Kvitka-Osnovianenko's contributions to modern Ukrainian literature, stating that the latter's characters supplied the Ukrainian readership with a 'mirror image' of who the Ukrainians were as a 'people' by offering them accurate descriptions of Ukrainian life, customs, traditions, mentality and national traits (Kostomarov 1843 [1996], 200). As the critic asserted, this was what made the writer popular and won him the unconditional love and respect of the Ukrainian audience.

It is important to stress here that toward the end of his life, Kostomarov expressed a different position, seeing the 'ethnographic realism' of Ukrainian literature as an impediment to its development. He articulateed, probably for the first time, the idea that national literature had to address the needs of a diversified audience, maintaining that literature was a necessity for the intelligentsia as well as for the masses. He reacted harshly against the 'ethnographic primitivism' of Ukrainian writers for he found it a very reductive method of representing Ukrainian life and experiences. As he wrote, "The strong winds, the hills of the steppe, the Cossacks, the *chumaks*,[22] the black-browed maidens, the cuckoos, the nightingales […] and other accessories of Ukrainian poetry have grown into

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народности. Изменялся вкус, изменялся и язык. Чуждестранные формы, которые наложены были на наше родное слово превратными понятиями об изящном, уступали родным формами народного языка великороссийского, облагороженного просвещением, науками и употреблением в вышем обществе. Изменялась и литература. Главное стремление ее было не к подражанию иностранному, но к своеродности" (Kostomarov 1843 [1996], 195-196).

[22] Ukrainian word naming the ox-cart drivers, who transported salt, fish and other goods from the Crimea; cf. Podvezko (1962, 987).

outdated and trivial clichés, vulgarized shadows akin to the [images] of ancient gods and shepherds in pseudo-classical literature."[23]

His dissatisfaction with the slow pace of Ukrainian society's nationalization is a possible reason for this criticism. Kostomarov sadly commented on the lack of interest demonstrated by his educated contemporaries, who in his view were involved in pseudo-nationalist pursuits ("writing stories and verses often tasteless and empty; eagerly dressing in quasi-national costumes for entertainment; spicing their speech with a Ukrainian saying or two, arguing about Shevchenko's merit"), instead of engaging in the meticulous study of the history and culture of Ukrainian people and the creation of the literature necessary for the education of the peasantry, or offering financial support for the national project of mass education.[24] Of course, there is always the possibility that Kostomarov in fact proposed only a stylistic critique, being more concerned with encouraging the improvement of modern Ukrainian literature's aesthetic qualities.[25] However, in my view, even if his was just a stylistic critique, the implications are still much more profound. Kostomarov's consistency in extolling Ukrainian folk culture as the placeholder of Ukrainian uniqueness shows that the scholar did not attempt to articulate a program denouncing the vernacular culture. Rather, it demonstrates that he reacted against the uncritical 'borrowing' and 'imitation' of the images, themes, techniques and style of Ukrainian oral traditions. As I read it, his criticism of 'ethnographic realism' is motivated by discontent with the nationalizing role of Ukrainian literature, whose failure to 'recruit' the members of the intellectual elite and to convert them into firm believers in the Ukrainian national cause he saw as the major hindrance for its development. Nevertheless, his solution is consistent in expressing a 'demotic vision' on the common culture, which was to be built with the peasant masses in mind. The idea that the peasantry was the foundation of Ukrainian society underlies his program of national revival; the solution he offered was the cultivation of 'educated' peasants under the guidance of intelligentsia, which was patriotically conscious and concerned with national well-being (Kostomarov 1882).

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[23] "Буйные ветры, степовые могилы, козаки, чумаки, чорнобриви дивчата, зозули, соловейки [...] и прочие принадлежности малороссийской поэзии становились избытими, типическими опошлелыми призраками, подобными античным богам и пастушкам псевдоклассической литературы [...] (Kostomarov 1871, 322). Page citations refer to the reprint in Betko and others 1994, 314-325.

[24] "[п]исать повести и стишки часто безцветные, пустые [...] охотно [одеватся] для забави в quasi-нациоальный костюм, ввернут в свою речь два-три малороссийских выражения, поспорят о достойнствах Шевченка" (Kostomarov 1862, 313). Page citations refer to the reprint in Betko and others 1994, 309-313.

[25] I thank Dr. Ilnytzkyj for suggesting this idea to me; I acknowledge that it is a feasible alternative to my interpretation.

Kostomarov's argument in favor of, and enthusiastic response to Ukrainian literature heavily depended on the notion of national character, which he persistently articulated throughout his writings. In his view, Ukrainian literature carried a unique understanding of the human condition that was expressed in the national character, hence, revealing the 'soul of the people.' Kostomarov, in principle, did not regard the fiction written in the Ukrainian spoken language to be of low quality because – as he argued – it disclosed characteristics such as high moral principles, genuine compassion, tolerance, free and independent spirit, pious religiosity, and acute sensitivity (Kostomarov 1843 [1996], 200-201). The critic saw the culturally specific nature of this young literature as one of its most valuable features, an inexhaustible source of patriotic pride and dignity. As he maintained, "Despite the small amount of original works, Ukrainian literature [...] can boast narratives that are totally original; these do not imitate foreign [works], do not express foreign ideas in a twisted form; there is no banal thought, common to all, but a truthful representation of the national character's distinctive quality."[26] Kostomarov concludes his review of Kvitka's short stories by pointing out that the Ukrainian writer's works were "*neizcherpaemym rodnikom chuvstva*" (inexhaustible resource of [patriotic] feelings; Kostomarov 1843 [1996], 201).

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[26] "при малом количестве своих произведении [Ukrainian literature] [...] может похвалится такими, в которых видно не какое-нибудь подражание чужому, не иностранные, чуждые идеи, одетые в искаженную форму, не жалкая всеобщность мысли всем известным, но истинное изображение своего,

In a similar vein, the critic also interpreted the function of the traditional Ukrainian folk poetry whose most powerful quality he recognized to be the "rich and dignified emotional overtones" that had allowed the Ukrainian peasants to communicate their passions, dreams, grievances and joys. He proceeds with a brief description of what in his view constituted the Ukrainian national character, exalting in a typically romantic fashion the peasantry as the carrier and incarnation of the 'national soul,' an elusive, but pervasive notion, often used in Ukrainian nationalist discourses to signify the substance of the collective identity. More specifically, Kostomarov, and he was not alone in this understanding,[27] conceptualized Kvitka's fictional characters, and especially his female personages, as ideal representations of what he perceived to be the virtues of the Ukrainians. Kvitka's imaginary personae, according to Kostomarov, revealed the peculiar piety, moral purity, and "dreaminess" (idealism, naïveté) with which the Ukrainian peasants continued to withstand and overcome their tragic fate. The critic identified their deep religiosity and extreme sensitivity as key elements of the Ukrainian national character. In his view, Ukrainians were "a young, but religiously enlightened People" (*narod iunom, no prosvetlennom religieiu*) and, as he was quick to add, sincere in the expression of their feelings. Emotional outbursts and false sentimentality, however, the critic remarked, were rare in

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родного, со всем отпечатком национального характера" (Kostomarov 1843 [1996], 200-201).

[27] Panteleimon Kulish also was fascinated with the notion of 'national character,' which he understood as those mores, beliefs and personal traits that constitute the nature of Ukrainian "ordinary, simple *Volk*" (*malorosiiskogo prostoliudina*). The writer interpreted Kvitka's fictional characters as powerful impersonations of Ukrainian ethnic identity, or as he had eloquently put it, "this profoundly moral essence, which comes from a society we do not know [...]" (*eto gluboko nravstvennoe litso, kotoroe vedet svoe proizkhozhdenie ot neizvestnogo nam obshchestvo*; Kulish 1857 [1996], 247).

Ukrainian folk songs. Trained by countless misfortunes in the past as well as the poignant ambiguity of their current history, the peasants disliked "rampant excitement" (*neobuzdannii vostorg*). Instead, Ukrainian folk songs reflected the contemplative nature and perpetual attempts of Ukrainian peasantry to face its ill-fated destiny with stoicism and steadfast determination (Kostomarov 1843 [1996], 202).

The idea apparently was very close to Kostomarov's heart because in 1861 he re-articulated his view on the Ukrainian national character in the article "Dvi rus'ki narodnosti" (Kostomarov 1861, 122-134).[28] In a more eloquent and sophisticated fashion, this text argues the irrevocable 'naturalness' of Ukrainian distinctiveness, stressing the fact that Russians and Ukrainians, although closely related, were two different people, whose collective psychological traits and mentality had little in common. Kostomarov identified as typically Ukrainian characteristics such qualities as free and independent spirit, love for the land, individualism, deep religiosity, tolerance and democratic sensitivity.

> But what is even worse for the Little Russian [Ukrainian] is the *mir*, or repartitional commune, which is widespread in Great Russia. The accusation of laziness usually levelled against the Little Russians is most often made when they are subjected to social conditions, which are foreign to them, such as serfdom or the *mir* communal organization. For the Little Russians, who are not chained together by narrow communal forums of property holding, the *mir* [...] limits personal freedom and the free disposition of goods (Kostomarov 1861, 134).

It seems clear that Kostomarov's argument evolves around a conceptualization of the common psychological characteristics, which consistently have been associated with Ukrainian peasantry and thus, frequently have been 'constructed' as the substance of the group identity. For example, earlier Mykhailo Maksymovych pointed to such 'typically' Ukrainian 'common' traits as love of freedom, independent, honest and proud spirit, open-mindedness, optimism, determination and lyricism (1827 [1996], 114-115). Kulish saw the Ukrainian peasantry as "gentle" (*nezhni*) and "simple-minded," a nation of genuine poets, who were possessed by tragic energy (*mrachna enerhiia*) and profound melancholy, expressing in their traditional songs and tales the magnificent simplicity of their habits ("*velychestvennoi prostote nravov*," *Epilogue*, 246-247). Apparently, the writings of the romantics were intended as powerful evocative messages that deployed the potential of symbolism of traditional *Volk* (the aesthetic idolization of Ukrainian folk songs seems to be a persuasive discursive strategy for stimulating and re-enforcing national self-consciousness) in order to convey the 'essence' of the collective identity thereby articulating a particularly 'idyllic' and tragic version of self-imagining that later generations, and especially the modernists, steadfastly denied.

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[28] Page citations refer to the abridged English translation of this text in Lindheim and Luckyj 1996. Cf. also Nechytaliuk 1999 (163-175) for a reprint of the original text.

Kostomarov's *Obzor* betrays an intriguing feature of the Ukrainian romantic, and later, populist nationalist discourses. The concept of *Volk*, as 'mapped' in the writings of the 19th century Ukrainian intelligentsia, is used to mobilize patriotic sentiments and stimulate the establishment of a national culture common to all Ukrainian speakers. As a strategic category, the concept of *slovesnost'* (literature) tended to encompass both the works of the modern written literary tradition as well as recorded and published folkloric materials. Eventually, it emerged as a central one for the imagining of national culture. In this way, clear distinctions between 'high' and 'low' literature were not made since the romantic intellectuals considered these irrelevant. Putting emphasis on the ethnic specificity of both Ukrainian folklore and modern literature, the Ukrainian romantics worked assiduously to intensify the symbolic value of the *printed* Ukrainian production because – in the eyes of the patriotic intelligentsia – it supplied the collective narratives, indispensable in the process of national consolidation. In this manner – to borrow the pertinent remarks of two contemporary theorists – the intellectual practice embraced a discourse of nationality that provided "a context that placed the folk culture on a positive historical trajectory" (Kennedy and Suny 409).

Respectively, both folklore and written literature were envisioned as the most important identity-securing mechanisms to promote the inculcation of common beliefs, behaviors, and identity.

Typical in this respect is Kulish's attempt to articulate Ukrainian literature's cultural specificity in what he defined as "the popular orientation of Ukrainian literature' ("*prostonarodnost' v ukrainskoi slovesnosti*;" Kulish 1862 [1996], 269-278). In this particular discourse, the Ukrainian writer took a stand against the accusations of the influential Russian literary critic Vissarion Belinskii, who espoused a negative view of the Ukrainian literary production, defining it as 'lowbrow' (*prostonarodna*). Kulish challenged Belinskii's position by asserting that the true merit of Ukrainian literature was its ability to manifest "respect for the individual, regardless of how low on the social ladder one [stood]" [29] (i.e., its democratic aspirations), and as he announced proudly, such great respect for humankind was championed in "all of Ukrainian oral literature, […] songs, legends, parables, proverbs, religious beliefs and general philosophical ideas."[30] Therefore, he claimed the intellectual's connectedness with the 'people' as an advantage. The adjuration to "a journey to the folk" roots, detected in his writing, constituted an integral part of his new national imagery. Thus, he promoted the appropriation and reworking of Ukrainian folklore texts as a much-admired intellectual practice that ensured the "proper tone" and "refined cultivation" of the collective image (Kulish 1862 [1996], 270).

Kulish advocated a close relationship between folklore and literature because he considered it important in successfully evoking empathy and interest in the Ukrainian readership. The feeling of empathy, as it has been pointed out, played a key role in the Ukrainian romantic aesthetics. Kulish employed the notion with the force of a central principle for the consolidation of communal sentiments:

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[29] "уважение к человеческой личности, как бы низко ни была она поставлена в гражданском обществе" (Kulish 1862 [1996], 269).

[30] " […] всей устной словесности нашего народа, […] его песнях, легендах, притчах, пословицах, верованиях и понятиях человека вообще" (Kulish 1862 [1996], 269).

> We say this, so that those who care for the development of our native literature – a profoundly vital idea – would take to heart the study of ethnographic materials [i.e., the items recorded from the talented peasant poets and narrators] and then, take any chance to test their conclusions in real life […] [To] recreate what one had heard … with the same power and authenticity so that *those who had not listened to it would experience in the course of reading what the artist had felt while creating it*, is perhaps an art form that evokes the same aesthetic feeling as that produced by putting into words one's first hand experiences."[31]

In this fashion, Ukrainian literature was affirmed as a social institution, complementary to vernacular traditions, and one that safeguarded the national interest and cultivated patriotism. Kulish made an appeal to the Ukrainian intelligentsia to record authentic stories from the Ukrainian peasantry and publish those unaltered. The critic clearly indicated the importance of a national identity that drew upon and reflected previous identities and traditions. It is also apparent that he understood the symbolical significance of the 'revived' cultural heritage for the construction of a common national culture. He was aware that it was insufficient to simply inherit established traditions. Thus, he urged that they be offered to the geographically dispersed and diverse Ukrainian readership. By means of the printed word, the items of this revived folk culture would be re-lived by current and future members of the Ukrainian nation as if they were part of their 'natural,' everyday life.

Hence, the reproduction and popularization of folklore material itself became a responsibility of the Ukrainian literary institution. Kulish, for example, was convinced that printed reproductions of folklore materials and their publication in literary journals amounted to a distinguishable aspect of modern Ukrainian literature. As he wrote, the popularization of folklore materials in print might result in "the formation of a literary production that entirely caters to the tastes and mentality of Ukrainian *Volk*" (Kulish 1862 [1996], 272). In other words, Kulish applauded this intellectual practice as "*delo narodnoe*" (a national enterprise) and supported it with patriotic gusto. He was convinced that the reproduction of the cultural heritage was of utmost importance because it facilitated the 'construction' of "a future – not individual, not personal, but the future of our people" (*budushtnost' ne sobstvennuiu, ne lichnuiu, a budushtnost' nashego naroda*; Kulish 1862 [1996], 273). Indeed, if one interprets Kulish's musings in light of some contemporary concepts, it is clear that the notion of national culture in his discourses emerged not simply as the manifestation of uniqueness but also as its 'guardian,' an "upholding map for the nation's future as well as an archive of its history" (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 7).

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[31] Все это мы говорим для того, чтобы каждый, кому дорогая идея родного слова нашего, идея глубоко жизненная, взял на себя труд подумать об этнографических очерках и потом, при всяком удобном случае, проверить свои самозаключения на самом деле. […] Воспроизведение слышанного […] в такой силе и истинности, чтобы те, кто не слышал, *испытивали, читая написанное, то самое, что ощущал писавший*, принадлежить, может быть, к тому же роду искусства, что и воспроизведение в слове видимого глазами (Kulish 1862 [1996], 272; italics mine).

Recently, Creg Calhoun has elucidated the power of such propositions as means of national agitation and their role in developing national-consciousness and a sense of solidarity. "Nationalism," he contends, "fundamentally transforms the pre-existing ethnic identities and gives new significance to cultural inheritances" (1997, 49). By extolling the closeness of modern Ukrainian literature and the existing or revived folk culture, the romantic nationalist ideologues in fact sought to establish the continuity of their cultural legacy. Their focus on the peasant traditions did not simply mean inheriting a pre-exisiting culture, which in their view embodied the Ukrainian ethnic ('primordial' and 'authentic') identity. They rather sought its transformation and adaptation to the new circumstances in order to keep it meaningful. Hence, the writing down of the stories told by Ukrainian peasants was a practice that itself implied a fundamental change in the social and cultural significance of Ukrainian traditional culture since there also continued many unselfconscious expressions of that culture ('eclipsed below' the new layer).

In Gellner's view, this change was instrumental for the nation-building process because, as he asserts, "nationalism is not the awakening and assertion of mythical, supposedly natural and given units [...] it is on the contrary, the crystallization of new units, suitable for the conditions now prevailing, though admittedly using as their raw material the cultural, historical and other inheritances from the pre-nationalist world" (qt. in Calhoun 1997, 49). In agreement with Gellner, Calhoun, and Jusdanis (cf. 2001, 44-52), I believe that the necessity of re-adapting such local narratives and peasant traditions, and their inclusion in the nationalist intellectual discourse also signifies their different meaning, for they "work differently for individuals and society when they are reproduced by artistic or academic specialists, when they are enshrined in sacred texts, and when they figure in the lives of many different small groups, each with its own, more local, word-of-mouth tradition" (cf. Calhoun 1997, 150). Kulish's discourse helps us grasp what such a difference entails, namely, that the local traditions thereafter are woven into fixed, individually authored texts that are circulated among a widely spread population and thus, become available for political and emotional manipulation of leaders and ideologues.

Paul James' theory of the nation as an abstract community supports such interpretation as well. In his attempt to conceptualize the nation as a "changing but distinctive kind of abstract community," this scholar spells out an ontology of nation formation that profoundly depends on the idea that modes of disembodied communication are essential for the constitution of those forms of human interaction that make the national association possible. According to James, the process of nation formation entails expansion and transformation of the human relations, which essentially become "relations of disembodied extension" (1996, 39). As he suggests, "[...] although the modern [...] nation continues to be experienced as a concrete, historically condensed relation between people, it is only through a constitutive lift in the level of abstraction that it is possible to feel comradeship with national mass who, except for one's personally known network of associations, will largely remain anonymous strangers" (James 1996, 39). Thus, the theorist urges us to accept "that societies are constituted in overlaying levels of abstraction." Therefore, when we talk about the "levels of social integration and forms of national association" this means we discuss "not only the abstraction of ideas but also the abstraction of lived social relations" (James 1996, 41).

I would agree with his statement that "[n]ational formation only becomes possible within a social formation constituted in the emerging dominance of relations of disembodied communication. This level of communication is abstracted from and yet based in a manifold intersection of prior levels – relations formed in and through the limitations and possibilities of relations in face-to-face and agency-extension" (James 1996, 45). The application of James' theory to the situation in Ukraine I see in his powerful insight regarding the role of intellectuals in the process of nation formation. According to him,

> If [...] national formation and subjectivity require as a necessary-though-not-sufficient condition the abstraction of social relations integrated in the emerging dominance of disembodied extension, then it comes as no surprise that intellectuals and the intellectually trained are in the forefront of imagining and enacting the nation. Such persons work in the medium of disembodied extension. They have in this capacity played a significant part in the complex basic changes in world history, changes which have brought us to the stage when the nation is deeply embedded yet deeply contradictory (James 1996, 195).

In my view, both the public articulation (orally delivered or printed discourses) and the private expression (in correspondence as well as intimate conversations and so on) of the Ukrainian nation by the patriotically conscious intellectuals demonstrates the complexity and intersection of different levels of interaction involved in the constitution and experiencing of the nation as a community of 'strangers' that share a common life and culture. Kulish's article is a good illustration of this. In addition, it clearly shows that 19th century Ukrainian intellectuals saw Ukrainian literature, and respectively culture, as a strategic tool for instituting, homogenizing and unifying the 'People.' As Kulish contended, "In this way, the popular orientation (*prostonarodnost*) of Ukrainian national literature is not a disadvantage, betraying the inability of our authors to write for a patriotic Ukrainian audience albeit small in numbers, but *a warrant for the transformation of Ukrainian literature into a national enterprise*."[32]

Modern Ukrainian literature was created and used to produce, manipulate and enforce ethnic consciousness. It was established as an important social institution to uphold the national interests of Ukrainian intellectuals in a public sphere[33] that allowed for "literate subjects [to] come together in order to reflect on the business of nations" (cf. Thorne 2001, 531). As Kulish had plainly put it, "the participation of many educated individuals and the general *sympathy* to our literature, shared by the people, provide the solid foundation of our [national] movement and prevent it from deteriorating and from taking a direction contrary to the essential demands of life."[34]

Kulish's discourse also makes it clear that the romantic nationalist rhetoric was motivated by "a desire to create the conditions for the nation to know itself better" (cf. Kennedy and Suny 1999, 4). The focus of intellectual efforts was the definition of boundaries with the neighboring people as well as the establishment of the public symbolical domain in which the 'unique' Ukrainian subjectivity could be freely expressed and maintained through participation in a number of distinguishable levels of social integration: from concrete face-to-face to abstractly 'disembodied' associations based on the 'shared' common culture, itself in a process of active construction. Kulish's literary criticism, then, demonstrates that the intellectual's concern was the unification of ideas that bind together and connect 'the people' by re-grouping pre-existent, culturally continuous local communities into a more or less 'homogenized' symbolical space (the nation) that made meaningful the collective past, present and future (cf. James 1996). Consequently, the romantics established the notion of nationality as an 'existential' category inclusive of people from different social strata and above all, the peasantry. This, as Yekelchyk has emphasized, was at the time a novel idea that provided Ukrainian intellectuals with a common goal: the pursuit of social, economic and cultural liberties (1994, 60).

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[32] "Таким образом простонародность в украинской словесности не есть свидетельство безсилия наших авторов писать для выделившейся из народа сравнительго малочисленной части украинцев, а напротив – *залог общенародного развития нашей словестности в будущем на широком основании* […]" (Kulish 1862 [1996], 277; Italics mine).

[33] Jurgen Habermas' lasting definition of the public sphere as characteristic of modernity considers it as "[a sphere] in which critical public discussion of matters of general interest was institutionally guaranteed" (qt. in Thorne 531). As Rainey explains, "[f]or Habermas the public sphere is a historically specific set of sites and institutions (salons, coffee houses, journals of opinion, web of social relationships) as well as a practice of rational and critical discourse on affairs (at first cultural and aesthetic, then civic and political in nature), a practice that institutionalizes a procedural ideal of unfettered critical exchange and a social one of inclusive participation" (1998, 5).

[34] "[…] участие множества грамотних людей и повсеместное *сочувствия* простонародья к произведениям нашей словесности сами по себе служат прочною основу дело и обеспечивають его, как от упадка, так и от уклонения в сторону, противоречащую насущним требованиям жизни" (Kulish 1862 [1996], 277; italics mine).

To conclude, Ukrainian romantics as engineers of the nation engaged mostly in what Foster has defined as "a segmentation of the global flow," i.e. demarcation of boundaries in which "space and time become bounded inasmuch as a continuous history becomes attached to a delimited territory" (cf. 1991, 236-237). They established the foundations of the 'abstract community' (the people) as a collective ideal to provide the driving force for future claims of self-determination. In their writings they sought to promote an understanding that, despite the indifferences, members of the Ukrainian nation share the same national attributes, which constitute their national identity (national character). In this sense, theirs was what Mark Beissinger (1996) has called "the quiet politics of nationalism" that manifested the potency of nationalism to provide "hidden transcript of resistance," whose disruptive power came from the "challenges it presented to the dominating or prescribed forms of national self-assertion."

Clearly, at that period, Ukrainian national identity involved defining Ukrainians as a part of the multiethnic Russian empire. The tensions between the more influential advocates of the all-Russian identity (Russophiles) and the few who insisted on a 'pure' Ukrainian identity (Ukrainophiles) presented a major source of confusion and frustration for the patriotically minded Ukrainian intelligentsia. Nevertheless, the articulation of an ethnic identity different from the all-Russian one already undermined the loyalties to the current state, and gave birth to the idea of political self-determination, which at the onset of the 20th century triumphed in the Ukrainian nationalist imagination (cf. Shkandrij 2001).

In this sense, the nationalist rhetoric of the romantics, especially Kulish's musings on the nation, suggest that Ukrainian nationalism – to put it in the words of one contemporary scholar – was not about "ancient enmities or even always about ethnicity, but rather about [...] the drawing of the physical, human and cultural boundaries" of the community and "the life chances that people believe are associated with these definitions of boundaries" (cf. Beissinger 1996). As a result, the patriotic Ukrainian intelligentsia was preoccupied with national agitation that attempted the institutionalization of new collective beliefs, attitudes and identities by allocating resources from the rules and assets of the available local intellectual traditions, while also utilizing the then prevalent romantic rhetoric of European nationalism. The purpose of this nationalist undertaking was "intellectually to elevate the overall centrality of the nation in public discourse" (cf. Kennedy and Suny 1999, 20).

2.3. Politicizing Ethnicity: The Populist Articulation of the Nation

The category of Ukrainian *Volk* was established in the writings of the romantics as an idealized ethnocultural entity that differed from the Russians and the Poles in their language, culture and history. The writings of the Ukrainian realists-populists, who started dominating the cultural scene in the late 19th century, reiterated those linguistic and cultural differences.[35] Folkloric discourses and ethnographic descriptions continued for a long time in the 19th century Ukraine to fill up the pages of populist literature, a type of literary production that defined the aesthetic taste and criteria for evaluating literary craft.[36]

Populist interests in the revival and popularization of Ukrainian vernacular culture were inspired mainly by a desire to reaffirm the commonality between the speakers of the Ukrainian language on both sides of the Dnieper.[37] Historically, the division of Western and Eastern Ukraine, and their consequent inclusion within the territories of different colonial powers, resulted in perceptible cultural differences between the two groups of speakers of Ukrainian. The populist movement, as I see it, had two goals. Firstly, through the creation of a popular literature, patriotic intellectuals sought to educate the enormous mass of illiterate peasantry as part of the process of Ukrainian modernization. Secondly, under the conditions of colonial oppression and in the absence of the legitimizing power and ideological authority of an autonomous political entity such as the nation-state, the populists viewed the process as a powerful strategy for the creation of 'national subjects.'

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[35] Populism in Ukraine was an influential ideology in the period of national revival (late 18th and the entire 19th century). Its main tenets were "federalism, the emancipation of peasantry, and the recognition of the cultural distinctiveness of the Ukrainian people" (Klid 1993, 152). They were actively engaged in the education of the peasant masses. In the so-called *Sunday schools*, they taught the illiterate peasantry how to read and write. The populists were also active in supporting the development of Ukrainian scholarship. In fact, many of the first Ukrainian scholars, individuals who started using the Ukrainian demotic to write on scholarly topics (history, linguistics, ethnography, archeology, literary studies and criticism) were members of populist organizations. They directly engaged in publishing popular religious and educational literature in the Ukrainian language with the intention to educate peasants, the majority of which at the time were illiterate.

[36] The best evidence for the influence of populist ideas on literary production, and their role in the formation of literary tastes of Ukrainian readership is found in the writings of Ukrainian modernists. On the pages of the hallmark modernist journal *Ukrains'ka khata* many critical articles appeared, fervently casting a stigma on the 'ethnographic' simplicity and mimetic realism of populist and realist literature that was produced by the representatives of the older generation of writers, such as Marko Vovchok, Ivan Nechui-Levytskyi, Ivan Franko, etc. (Cf. Klid 1993, 154, and Ilnytzkyj 1994: 9-13).

[37] For more details on the historical development of the Ukrainian national movement on the territory of Left Bank Ukraine, see Magocsi (1996, 436-460).

The dominance of populists on the turn-of-the-century Ukrainian cultural scene was marked by additional changes in the societal semantic and structural order, which facilitated the crystallization of a new version of Ukrainian national identity. This identity accommodated within itself the first explicitly political justifications of the Ukrainian nation, thus substantiating a cultural-political conceptualization of the nation as opposed to the primarily cultural-linguistic one of the romantics. With respect to the analysis of Ukrainian modernist practices, I would like to stress here that the definition of the nation in political terms resulted in perceiving the content of the emerging national community in a particular way (demotic version) to which the Ukrainian modernist reacted with a scathing critique. They saw the populist model as reductive and quite inadequate to support a fusion of the political and cultural principles, which could secure the process of national consolidation by safeguarding the prestige and originality of Ukrainian national culture. Having stated this in advance, I hope the *raison d'être* of my argument will become clearer as the discussion progresses.

A document left by Mykhailo Drahomanov, namely the *Draft of the Constitution for Ukrainian Society* (herafter *Draft*; Drahomanov 1884 [1996], 171-184), suggests that in his time, the idea of political independence was an inaccessible alternative for the leading Ukrainian intellectuals because of the nature of the political regime in the context of which the Ukrainian national idea initially developed. In this case, the repressive politics of the imperial colonial administrations made the open formulation of political claims an unfeasible task. Miroslav Hroch has shown convincingly that such forthright political expression and advancement of national interests in the multiethnic European empires became possible only after the introduction of constitutional regimes, i.e., since the 1860s in Austria and after 1905 in Russia (1995, 70-71).

In Drahomanov's *Draft*, it is declared that the patriotic obligation of his fellow Ukrainians was to "work to improve their intellectual and ethical standards, and to strive to occupy as prominent a place as possible in all causes benefiting society" (1884 [1996], 180). They had to work hard to prepare younger generations for the political unity of all inhabitants of Ukrainian territory while simultaneously seeking out "in every locality and in every class, ways of life, traditions and aspirations that might serve as a natural basis for introducing the aspirations of the Free Union" (Drahomanov 1884 [1996], 180).

The respected 19th century Ukrainian political activist imagined the Free Union (*vol'nii soiuz*) as a federation of Ukrainian and Russian territories in which all nations – Russians, Ukrainians and others, lived in prosperity and peace with each other. The goal of the Free Union, as he formulated it, was to allow for "the political, economic, and cultural emancipation and progress of the Ukrainian people and of other races living among them in settlements" (Drahomanov 1884 [1996], 171). Within this frame, in my view, he worked for the construction and popularization of a Ukrainian ethnic identity that effectively could distinguish the Ukrainians in the context of a democratic and eventually, a socialist Russian state. His assessment of the political situation at the time was crystal-clear: before attempting to resolve the Ukrainian national question, the people have to be socially and economically liberated, which meant the abolishment of absolutist rule and the establishment of a democratic and constitutional state as a guarantee of human rights for all citizens inhabiting the imperial territory. For instance, Drahomanov declared that, "[...] the idea of nationality itself is insufficient to bring justice and freedom to all people. It alone cannot provide for the managing of state affairs too [...]. We have to seek out universal justice that would be in the mutual interests of all nations" (Drahomanov 1991, 469). Along the same lines, he stated in his article "*Literatura Rosiis'ka, Velykorus'ka, Ukrains'ka i Halits'ka*" (Drahomanov 1873) that at the present time, "[...] nationalism is a very old song if it is analyzed carefully; it is often associated with a new [song] about freedom and about democracy, popular rule."[38] In his view, true patriotism defied narrow-minded (ethnic) nationalism and separatism. Instead, it involved a concern for the wellbeing of one's fellow countrymen and was expressed in a deliberate and dedicated service to 'the people' (Drahomanov 1873, 152, note 1). The political justification of the nation, in this sense, became the crux of disputes and divisions among Ukrainian populists. Worthy of note here is Drahomanov's lament that Ukrainian nationalists, in spite of talking profusely about the cultural (ethnographic) and linguistic autonomy of the Ukrainian people, rarely addressed the political aspects of the national question, which, as the ideologue stated, "in itself, [was] the most important issue" (Drahomanov 1994, 201). I will touch upon this matter again later. Here, let me briefly outline the model of culture the populists proposed and examine their vision of who and what constituted the Ukrainian nation.

The populists followed the romantics in endorsing the Ukrainian peasantry as the core of the nation. Typical in this sense are Drahomanov's remarks that "the village and the peasant (*selo i muzhyk*) are the foundations of the state" (Drahomanov 1873, 131). In his view, "[…] the characteristics of the nation […] have been preserved exclusively in the peasantry" (*oznaky natsional'ni vyderzhalys' naibil'sh* […] *abo vykliuchno u prostomu narodi* […]; Drahomanov 1873, 152, note 1). As Drahomanov's and other discourses suggest, the populists tended to idealize the peasantry to a lesser degree than the romantics. In my view, they approached 'the people' with a rather somber criticism that inspired a 'revision' of the values and ideals that the traditional culture embodied. This attempt, to some extent, motivated their educational and cultural politics, elaborated from the perspective of creating a national culture to meet the needs of the peasantry (i.e., they insisted on the creation of literature and culture 'for the masses'). Again, Drahomanov's observation that under the circumstances, the Ukrainian people needed "utilitarian literature" (*praktychna literatura*) is typical for the 'populist' way of thinking. Drahomanov insisted on the creation of a truly national literature that could "[…] convey to the people the scientific ideas they require or tell them about their life in their living language."[39] In his view, such literature should be based "on the native Ukrainian character and traditions, but also doing so in harmony with the progress of European-Russian [imperial] scientific and literary ideas." One detects a similar intent in his remark that national literature started to serve its proper function only when the populace was given literature that was appropriate to its level; in his view this was "utilitarian and educational" literature. The scholar contended that "a person will turn away from a nationally formalistic, pointless literature, while a retrograde literature will make one impotent for the purpose of competition with his neighbor; finally, the people [nation] itself will turn away, beginning with those individuals who are most intelligent."[40]

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[38] "У наш вік – націоналізм – ця дуже стара пісня, як розібрати її, – часто зв'язується с новою – про волю і про демократію, народоправство" (152, note 1).

In this respect, the idea of 'mass education,' which provided both a key objective and a key strategy for national mobilization, is characteristic of populist ideology. Drahomanov articulated this objective rather succinctly: "National independence without a certain level of education will lead neither to liberalism nor democracy" (Drahomanov 1994, 165). Hence, 'the journey-back-to-the-people,' which the romantics extolled, in the populist ideology means learning to understand and appreciate the culture of the *Volk* and, most importantly, changing the mentality of the peasants through education and engagement in public discussion in order to prepare them for political actions that would ensure the improvement of their social, economic, political and cultural conditions. A positivist and pragmatist agenda informed the populist rhetoric of the nation, whereas a critical reflection on the romantic exaltation of Ukrainian peasantry turned into a principle strategy of distinction. To illustrate this thought let me cite here from Drahomanov's critical reflections. In his article *Literatura*, he wrote:

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[39] "живою народною мовою розказати народу потрібні йому наукові ідеї або розказати про життя народне" (Drahomanov 1873, 142).

[40] "[…] бо від літературі формально-націоналістичноі, пустоі, народ відвернеться, а література ретроградна обезсилить його в конкуренції з сусідами, та нарешті від неї […] відвернеться й сам народ починаючи від своїх більше інтелігентих особ" (Drahomanov qt. in Muchin 1987, 74).

> The following is what a reader, accustomed to realism and social analysis in the new European literatures, sees in Ukrainian lyric poets: a terrible poverty of thought and vagueness; family, enemies, enemies, enemies; Cossack glory, freedom – but what kind? Planting of the field, but how? Ancestral warnings prediciting social or divine retribution á la the Psalms; suffering on account of the problems that one must endure for the sake of the family, Ukraine; suffering that is hardly a match for what a simple man endures from exploiters; and, then, in the end, the repugnantly boring complaints against one's 'fate.'[41]

It is interesting to note also that Drahomanov's thoughts clearly resonate with Kostomarov's latest laments about the narrow-mindedness and reductionism of contemporary Ukrainian literature. For instance, in his article "Ukrainian literature," Kostomarov contended that, "[…] the mimetic ethnographic trend [began] exhausting all its resources at times when [Ukrainian] intellectuals [started] thinking about progress […] It turned out to be a rather limited [approach], and peasant life that previously provided inexhaustible resources for literature, from this perspective, proved to be rather impoverished."[42] Similarly,

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[41] "У ідеях видна бідність і неясність: родина, вороги, вороги, вороги, слава козацька, воля, а яка?, і як ... засівання ниви, а як? угроза помстою, народним або божим судом якось á ла псалми, плач на горе, которе привелось терпіть за родину, за Україну, горе, далеко не таке велике, як те, що терить усякий простий чоловік от ескплуататорів, а у кінці опротивілі до нудності жалоби на «долю» – ось що бачить у українських ліриків читатель, привикший до реалізму і соціального аналізу нових европейських літературе" (Drahomanov 1873, 159).

[42] Изобразительно-етнографическое направление исчерпывалось в эпоху когда все мыслящее думало о прогрессе […] оно оказывалось слишком узким, простонародная жизнь, представлявшаяся прежде облагодающею несметным богатствам для литературы, с этой точки зрения, являлась очень скудною […] (Kostomarov 1871, 35). Page citations refer to the reprint in Betko and others 1994, 314-425.

Drahomanov – being one of Ukrainian vernacular culture's most passionate advocates – also clearly articulated the necessity for breaking away from the ethnographic dilettantism "*etnohrafichnyi dylentantyzm*" and "pseudo-realism" in Ukrainian literature (Drahomanov 1873, 162).

He voiced an almost identical position in his "*Lysty na Naddniprians'koi Ukrainy*" (hereafter *Letters*). Here Drahomanov stated: "The growth and civic value of literature was based not only on ethnographic, and more specifically, on linguistic foundations, but on the entire sum of historical and cultural conditions in which nations live."[43] In fact, although Drahomanov recognized the power of the Ukrainian nation's ethnic definition, which insisted predominantly on the linguistic and cultural distinctiveness of Ukrainians, it is also apparent that for him this was a notion that could not provide a suitable basis for the articulation of a Ukrainian national identity to uphold claims for political independence. From this perspective, the critic assessed the aesthetic modes previously used to describe the Ukrainian people's life and lore as inadequate under the new conditions. The scholar evaluated this type of writing as 'provincialism' and refused to acknowledge it as a truly artistic representation because, in his view, it potrayed a distorted image of Ukrainian reality. Although he promoted the idea of creating a literature for the 'peasants,' his notion of *narodnist'*[44] was very different from Kulish's concept of *prostonarodnist'*.

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[43] "зрість і громадска вартість літератури основивались [не] тільки на грунті єтнографічному, а ще спеціальніше на лінгвістічному, а на всій сумі історичних і культурних обставин, в котрих живуть народи" (Drahomanov 1994, 208-209).

[44] Cf. his note in the article on the relationship between Ukrainian and Russian literature, where he makes a distinction between *natsionalizm* (nationalism) and *narodovstvo* (patriotism; Drahomanov 1873, 151-152, note 1). In my view, Drahomanov espouses a very interesting form of vernacular nationalism (*kosmopolitychnoho narodovtsva*, ibid.), which aims at articulating universal civil ideals by means of a distinctively 'local' culture ("*kosmopolityzm v ideiakh i tsiliakh, natsionalnism v hrunti i formakh kulturnoi pratsi*" (Drahomanov 1994, 190).

Developed within a social-liberal ideological framework and in direct opposition to the romantic idealization of the 'people,' Drahomanov's national vision revealed his deep conviction that the Ukrainian peasantry must be exposed to, and learn to live by the Western standards of social equality, political and cultural autonomy and European humanistic values. "The true patriot," argued Drahomanov, "cannot be a nationalist" who in the name of restrictive nationalism "neglects to work for the social good of his compatriots." He espoused the idea of social happiness as a universal ideal, the realization of which was impending. In Drahomanov's view, "the [true Ukrainian] patriot could respect the historical forms of national existence when these are impregnated with the seed of cosmopolitanism."[45] He encouraged his compatriots to labor to awaken a sense of national belonging that encouraged "the growth of popular will and practices" (*zrostu voli i obichai masy narodu*). He maintained that Ukrainian patriots love their homeland because it was a territory where they could initiate humanist endeavors with the least amount of effort (Drahomanov 1873, 152, note 1; cf. also Drahomanov 1994, 190). Thus, Drahomanov's intellectual articulation of the nation focused on the propagation of civic ideals, and it is not surprising that in his discourses France and the formation of the French nation were often cited as an example to follow. "At first ethnographic-national feelings (soul) were irrelevant. We consciously place before the word 'national' also the word 'ethnographic' in order to make our ideas clearer because the word 'nation' in European [fashion] also means sometimes '*state*' but not 'race.' The world knows *political-national autonomy*, which is separate from the *national-ethnographic*."[46]

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[45] "Народовець може поважати історичні форми життя національного тільки тогді, як вони мали або мають зерна його космополітичних ідей, може будити почуття національні тільки такі, которі ведуть до зросту волі і обічаїв мас народу, – він може любити родину свою тільки яко місце, де він найлегше може працювати для чоловіка" (Drahomanov 1873, 152, note 1).

[46] "Етнографічно-національне почуття (душа) спершу тут було ні при чому. Ми навмисне ставимо при слові *національне* і слово етнографічне, щоб думка наша була ясніше, бо слово *нація* в европейській термінології іноді

Drahomanov's comments oddly resonate with current theoretical distinctions between ethnic and civic nationalism, therefore posing, perhaps for the first time in the Ukrainian intellectual space, the problem of nationalism's elusiveness and inherent contradictions.

The motto "realism and social analysis" succinctly summarizes the essence of Drahomanov's aesthetic and cultural building incentives. I see it as a key to understanding Drahomanov's intellectualizations. He praised realism as a method that allowed an objective and accurate description of the historical conditions in which the Ukrainian people's lives unfolded. He endorsed it as an aesthetic approach that in concrete images revealed the social and political injustices the Ukrainian people endured. Drahomanov considered realism to be a powerful aesthetic ideology because it required artists to 'capture' the typical and the usual in the life struggles of peasants, thereby offering an accurate (mirror image) representation of reality. In his view, such images inspired and motivated for changes. He, for example, praised Kulish's ability to create life-like characters ("*rodyty zhyvi typy*") and demanded from Ukrainian authors to provide insights into the "psychology of the peasant family," exposing the economic oppression plaguing the life of Ukrainian peasants (Drahomanov 1873, 160, 162).

His comments on contemporary Russian literature revealed the intellectual premises of his aesthetic evaluation. As Drahomanov declared, the new Russian literature was not concerned with the expression of shallow nationalistic ideals, but tried "to investigate nature as it was and to create living characters, struggling most against despotism in all its forms and manifestations, protesting not by means of empty phrases but scenes and characters [whose presence in the literature reinforces its national specificity]." The critic maintained that, "the sphere of prose and poetry is already broadening while *nationality itself follows*

значить *держава*, а не *раса* і на світі часто проявляється автономізм політично-національний, осібний від етнографічно-національного" (Drahomanov 1994, 163; author's italics).

the images and characters taken from the national source."[47] As he believed, literature was to enlighten and awaken the peasant masses by offering social-political and national ideals. Therefore, Ukrainian writers should extol the ideas of West European liberalism and socialism as well as the Ukrainian people's cultural distinctiveness. In this sense, his agenda argued for the 'Europeanization' of Ukrainian society, and was drawn from a more international rather than regional perspective.

In comparison to Kulish and Kostomarov's romantic approach, the most obvious difference in Drahomanov's attitude, which signaled a change in the Ukrainian intelligentsia's self-perception as national leadership and the tasks it must fulfill, was the orientation toward mass education and mass culture as political opportunities to enforce 'real' Ukrainianization. In this respect, Drahomanov's nationalism was what the Hungarian intellectual George Konrad has defined as "self-expanding national strategy that takes anything from the outside world that can be fruitfully related to what was previously considered national and delights in integrating the two" (qt. in Kennedy and Suny 1999, 17). In my view, Drahomanov's discourses outlined a new context for imagining the nation. As already mentioned, he explicitly conceptualized the Ukrainian polity in relation to Europe, demonstrating an acute awareness of the current historical conditions in which the nationalization of Ukrainians took place. He was considerate of the multiethnic state structure within which Ukrainians lived and the importance that the existing imperial high culture traditionally had for the articulation and promotion of the Ukrainian national idea. As he saw it, the products of this hybrid culture, although printed in the Russian language (what he defined as all-Russian literature), served as a medium that connected Ukrainians with the rest of the world, and more importantly, introduced them to vanguard European ideas and developments. He refused to belittle the fact that Ukrainian literature, and respectively culture, grew out of an imperial history shared with the Russians and out of the same imperial institutions (Drahomanov 1873, 105, 143-144).

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[47] "Російска і великоруська белетрискика і поєзія сих часів не задавалась вже якими-небудь узкими національними ідеалами: вона старається висліджувати наруру як вона є […] і виводить живи типи, найбільше борючись против деспотизму в усіх його формах і проявах, протестуючи не голими фразами, а картинами, типами. Сфера белетристики і поєзіі усе розширяється, […] а *національність сама собою йде за картинами і типами, узятими з національного джерела*" (Drahomanov 1873, 159; italics mine).

In this sense, paramount for his articulation of the nation was the proposed model of relationships between the Ukrainian nation and the Russian Empire,[48] which he defined in terms of political, social and cultural oppression, urging for constitutional reforms that would guarantee the state's liberalization and democratization. For example, in his *Letters*, Drahomanov wrote: "It has to be admitted once and for all that serious work for the benefit of the Ukrainian masses is impossible as long as there is no political freedom in Russia. And this means that the Ukrainian movement itself cannot have serious civic meaning as long as it does not take a political direction."[49] In other words, in his discourses, the tensions between the 'center' and the 'periphery' enter into the play, although Drahomanov failed to acknowledge this distinction as a valuable principle of national boundary demarcation and social categorization. As I will try to show, the modernists transformed it into a key category by means of which they expressed the cultural distinctiveness of Ukrainians and substantiated their claims for political independence.

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[48] Of course, Drahomanov was not the first to conceptualize Ukrainian national culture in relation to, and within the context, of Europe. As previously noted, the notion of Europe constituted a particular 'knot' of tensions and anxieties, which the first designers of Ukrainian identity could not completely ignore. However, the European framework did not play such a prominent role in their articulation of the nation for a number of reasons. Here I cannot explore all of those in depth. Suffice it to point out only that Ukrainian romantics did not perceive Europe as a 'threat' to their identity-defining efforts and they adopted the European nationalist rhetoric without resistance because they did not feel the need to re-inscribe the locality (Ukraine) in global relations to the same degree. For them, as already stated, more important task was to define the boundaries of the ethnoscape and transform it into a 'homeland.'

[49] "Треба раз назавше признати, що серіозна праця для маси української не можлива, поки не буде в Росії політичної волі, а значить, що й український рух не може мати серіозної громадської ваги, поки не стане на політичний грунт" (Drahomanov 1994, 206-207).

Important, in the light of later developments in the intellectual articulation of the Ukrainian nation, especially the elitist model outlined by the modernists, is another distinction that Drahomanov introduced into his nationalist rhetoric, namely the distinction between 'high' and 'low' culture, a boundary that became another "pole of anxiety" (cf. Jusdanis 1991, 27) for the Ukrainian intelligentsia. His ultimate objective of establishing Ukrainian national culture as separate from the Russian in content and form[50] was supported by his demand to create literature for a very broad audience ("*velyka publyka*"), growing from the 'bottom' to the 'top' ("*znyzu vhoru*"; "*vid literatury prostoi do vysokoi,*" *Letters* 181) and expanding its subject matter as the interests of the peasantry changed (Drahomanov 1994, 211). He recommended that modern Ukrainian literature give priority to universal human interests, aspiring to discover those in the national character. As Drahomanov insistently reminded, it should help to cultivate a sense of human dignity and desire for struggle against the remnants of retrograde and repressive ideologies (Drahomanov qt. in Muchin 1987, 76).

Drahomanov's position appears to be typical for the populist way of thinking in that it was somewhat ambiguous and failed to draw a clear line between 'high' and 'low' cultural production. He endorsed a model similar to the one articulated earlier by the Ukrainian romantics who insisted on the creation of a national culture to strengthen the relationships between the intelligentsia and the peasant masses, and thereby to facilitate the process of national consolidation.

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[50] Drahomanov admits that he, "on the basis of Ukrainian folk songs, considers the national consciousness of Ukrainian peasants to be highly developed and the Ukrainian language to be quite rich," and so, he is hopeful that "*a popular literature different from the Russian will emerge.*" He is certain that such literature immediately would attract large audiences because "it will be the fruit of life and not the outcome of scholarly speculations" (Drahomanov 1994, 211; italics mine). Cf. also his statement that by 1873, "Ukrainian literature grew and somewhat freed itself from the hegemony of Russian literature" (ibid.).

Yet, Drahomanov defined the populist idea of 'mass literature' which focused exclusively on peasant needs and interests as "formal nationalism without patriotism (*formalnyi natsionalizm bez narodoliubstva*)," arguing against Hrinchenko that national culture was a product of the intellectuals' efforts to reflect on, and express their knowledge and understanding of the Ukrainian people's experiences and mentality (Drahomanov 1994, 188). Perhaps, this is why his contemporaries so harshly reacted to his position. For example, Borys Hrinchenko accused him of servility to the Russians and betrayal of the Ukrainian national ideal (Hrinchenko 1892 [1994], 95-96). Ivan Franko also disapproved of Drahomanov's political pragmatism, blaming him for having no faith in the Ukrainian "national ideal, taken to its logical conclusion in political life." This lack of faith the West Ukrainian writer identified as the major cause for Drahomanov's life-tragedy and, as he phrased it, "the source of the impotence of his political strivings" (Franko 1900 [1996], 198-199).

2.4. The Intelligentsia and the Masses:
The Populist—Modernist Debate

The Myth of the 'Assimilated' Ukrainian Elites

Also, significant for the intellectual articulation of the Ukrainian nation was another boundary, namely, the divide between the Ukrainian intelligentsia and the peasant masses. Initially articulated towards the end of the 19th century, and more consistently in the beginning of the 20th century as the myth of the 'inefficient elites,' this rupture was used as a strategy by means of which Ukrainian patriotic intellectuals affirmed their hegemony in the Ukrainian cultural space. This strategy of distinction warrants closer discussion. It offers a chance to illuminate some deeply embedded stereotypes of self-imagining in the Ukrainian intellectual thought that reveals the controversies surrounding the intellectuals' own invention as a national leadership.

In Ukraine as well as in Bulgaria, the initial discursive articulation of the nation betrays a peculiar type of paradoxical intellectual behavior that characterized the work of the social imagination. The Bulgarian scholar Aleksandŭr K'osev has labeled this complex of ideas as "self-colonization" (1999). The American anthropologist Michael Herzfeld (1997) refers to it as "cultural intimacy." Regardless of the term used, the heart of this paradoxical behavior constitutes the intelligentsia's need for self-reproach and criticism, tirelessly expressed in a prescriptive negative stereotype, identifying the national elites as "insufficiently nationalized, small in numbers and powerless, lazy and internally divided" (Hrinchenko 1882, 41). As both the romantics and the populists saw it, the Ukrainian intelligentsia's most notorious characteristic was its detachment from its own 'People.' For example, Hrinchenko glumly observed in his *Lysty z Ukrainy Naddniprians'koi* (hereafter *Letters*):

> Anyone who now looks at Ukraine will become sad, very sad. The whole country has split into two distinct camps: lords and peasants, intelligentsia and the people. [...] Many things have divided them: social conditions, both economic and educational; laws and individualism; education (albeit mostly superficial) has separated the lord from the peasant. But one must add one more thing – and this one divides them completely: the lord has abandoned his nationality [...]. [51]

The split between the intelligentsia and the people and the guilt complex associated with it respectively became an important aspect of the Ukrainian nation's intellectual articulation. In the next section I will attempt a brief explanation of this phenomenon in the light of Ian Craib's theory of emotional intersubjectivity (1998), as revised and expanded by Carolyne Vogler (2000).

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[51] "Сумно, сумно стане тому, хто подивиться тепер по нашій Україні! Вся карїна розбилася на два виразні табори – *панів* та *мужиків*, *інтелігенцію* та *народ*. [...] Розрізнило їх багато речей: і соціальні обставини, і економічні, і просвітні. І правами, і замогністю, і просвітою (хоча здебільшого тільки позверховною) відрізнився пан от мужика. Та додається ще одна річ, і ся річ розрізняе їх украй: пан зрікся своеї наліональності [...] (Hrinchenko 1882, 37).

Recently the growing interest in the psychology of nationalist behavior and national identity has enhanced the awareness of the role that emotions such as anger, frustration, resentment, contempt, guilt, shame, envy, jealousy, fear and anxiety play in the processes of social identity formation. In current psychological accounts of nationalism these emotions are conceptualized as important driving forces, generating national sentiments and attachments (cf. Bloom 1990, Sheff 1994, Craib 1998, Cottam and Cottam 2001). Craib, for instance, conceptualizes national identity as a specific form of collective (social) identity that, put in Vogler's phrasing, is "not just a result of social classification, boundary demarcation, and processes of identification but also has an important [subjective] emotional dimension" (2000, 19). According to Vogler, in Craib's view, the formation of a national identity is the outcome of "interplay between sociological and unconscious psychological processes," stimulated by the transmission and sharing of a range of emotions, communicated in the processes of interaction between the members of a community (2000, 22). As she indicates, "[...] the emotional dimension of identity is rooted in the unconscious object relations, fantasies and defense mechanisms [...] of splitting, projection and projective identification which in addition to protecting individuals against anxiety, also operate as unconscious forms of emotional communication" (ibid.). Under certain circumstances, group members could unite to "respond to outsiders (and sometimes *even to some of their own members*) emotionally, as if they disliked parts of their own selves" (Vogler 2000, 25; italics mine).

Drawing also on Bion's theory of social dynamics (1962), which examines the operation of emotional intersubjectivity in groups, Vogler suggests that often the group members experience conflicting or even contradictory emotions with respect to their group since "pleasant feelings like security are always experienced in combination with less pleasant ones such as hate, frustration and inadequacy, this leading to anxiety, which group members defend against by resorting to one of the three basic defense mechanisms," namely, splitting, projection and projective identification (2000, 25-26). In stressful or conflictual social situations, "the anxiety generated by external social conditions combines with the […] anxiety evoked by membership of the group to precipitate individual regression to primitive paranoid defences which are then projected and given objective existence in the social structure and culture of the community" (Vogler 2000, 26). In such instances, "social conflicts in the external social world […] come to be reinforced by social defense mechanisms so that aggression is collectively displaced onto subgroups and external enemies" (Vogler 2000, 27). Especially strong, she underscores, are "the tacit assumptions about the purpose of the group, which are not expressed explicitly but give meaning to its behavior" and thus, the expression of the anxiety is "underpinned by internal fantasy so that conflicts in the external social world come to be experienced in a very polarized way as a battle between the forces of good and evil, victims and villains, them and us […]" (Vogler 2000, 28).

In my understanding, the conditions under which the Ukrainian intelligentsia operated since the mid-19th century were particularly unfavorable and represented a critical situation where membership in the group (i.e., the Ukrainian nation) could produce extremely strong conflicting emotions (shame and pride, rage and guilt, love and hate, etc.). The release of the felt anxieties seemingly took the form of splitting and projection, which on the one hand, strengthened the Ukrainian ethnic identity of the patriots whereas the perceived 'bad' behavior was projected onto a particular subgroup (the 'assimilated elites' or later, the 'older' generations). The representatives of such subgroups served as 'scapegoats' for the Ukrainian patriotic intelligentsia's dissatisfaction with its own social status of a colonially oppressed intelligentsia, and the slow progress of Ukrainian society's nationalization. Interesting evidence in this regard is provided in the speech prepared by Drahomanov to be presented at the International Literary Congress held in Paris (1878), where he wrote: "We just want to show the wide world that terrible injustice of which we are the *victims* in Russia. And we are certain that the congress will not remain indifferent to our plight and will find some way to come to our aid."[52]

Borys Hrinchenko in his *Letters* is much more explicit. There he angrily talks about the current state of affairs in Ukraine, clearly articulating the line that separated the patriots from the assimilated Ukrainian intellectuals. In his view, there were two major impediments for the nationalization process in Ukraine. The first was the fact that the Ukrainian intelligentsia was part of the all-Russian intelligentsia. The second hindrance in Hrinchenko's eyes was that the Ukrainian people had undeveloped national consciousness (1882, 51). The negative assessment of the Russian intelligentsia, whose representatives the critic defined as "insufficiently cultured" (*malokul'turni*, Hrinchenko 1882, 53) is combined in his discourse with a more decisive articulation of Ukrainian cultural distinctiveness and a more rigid delineation of the ethnic boundary with the Russians. On this ground, the model of cultural autonomy that Hrinchenko proposed insisted on the creation of a Ukrainian national culture shielded from the influences of the imperial centers (Moscow, St. Peterburg, etc.) and even from Europe (1882, 55; 107). In addition, Hrinchenko urged for the unification of Ukrainians, refusing to accept a division of Ukrainian national culture into 'high' and 'low,' stating that such distinctions were ahistorical and illogical (1882, 93). At the same time, he gave immense significance to the work of those few, whom he considered to be true patriots, praising them for their struggle to establish the social, economic, political and cultural rights of the Ukrainian people (Hrinchenko 1882, 105). He criticized Drahomanov's 'cosmopolitism' as well as the work of older generations of Ukrainian patriots – people like Kvitka, Kulish, Kostomarov, etc.– whose nationalist visions he denounced as futile, claiming that they were individuals divided in their loyalties: "[…] the Ukrainian activist of that time had two souls: one Ukrainian, the other Russian. The Ukrainian soul came from his people, from the feeling of love for one's own native land, from love for one's language, for one's nation; the Russian soul was inspired by the Russian leadership. This is why the Russian intellectual then was pulled in two directions."[53]

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[52] "Ми хочемо тільки показати широкому світові тую страшную несправедливість, которої ми є *жертвами* в Росії, і ми певні, що конгрес не остане рівнодушим на наші упімнення і найде якийсь спосіб прийти нам на поміч" (qt. in Bernstein 1988, 189; italics mine).

The historical *raison d'être* behind the ambiguity and indeterminacy of the Ukrainian intelligentsia's national loyalties warrants a closer examination. But here I will limit myself to two brief remarks conceding that mine is an insufficient and somewhat superficial treatment.[54] The ensuing discussion is based on Kas'ianov's study on the formation of Ukrainian intelligentsia in Eastern Ukraine (1993). His work sheds light on the social factors underpinning the attitudes of the patriotic Ukrainian intellectuals and their efforts in organizing and promoting the national movement.

First, as Kas'ianov has already pointed out, the specific national-demographic constitution of the Ukrainian intelligentsia and the peculiar historical circumstances under which it operated at the turn of the 20th century, significantly affected the forging and expression of its national dispositions. According to Kas'ianov, in that period the Ukrainian intelligentsia was poorly organized, too homogenized, and a leader of a "backward agrarian nation with a deformed agrarian structure" (1993, 41). The social context in which the Ukrainian national movement evolved was characterized by the 'modernization' initiatives of the imperial administrations, which brought about one of the most profound social changes within the Ukrainian society. This was the migration of Ukrainian youth from the village to the city. As a result, ethnically aware, but politically inert, young Ukrainians were 'uprooted' from their regional vernacular traditions and became "available for nationalist propaganda" (cf. Hall, J. 1995, 16; Hroch 1985). Moving to the large Russified urban centers, such individuals faced a serious dilemma: to adopt the lifestyle of the assimilated urban intellectuals and themselves become assimilated, or to resist the Russian cultural dominance, maintaining and further developing their ethnic Ukrainian identity (Kas'ianov 1993, 43). Furthermore, as Kas'ianov's analysis demonstrates, opportunities for the recruitment of Ukrainian patriots were profuse, for the influences of the patriotically mindful, older generations of Ukrainian urban intelligentsia, were also very strong. The patriotically conscious Ukrainian urban intellectuals, such as the Kosach family, showed to the insecure and confused Ukrainian youth that recognition of one's Ukrainian cultural roots (ethnicity) could be the source of great psychological comfort, pride and dignity.[55] The exposure to such influences had very specific consequences since the close interactions between the urban and the rural Ukrainian intelligentsia obscured the differences between the village and the city as two distinctive habitats of modernity. This in turn, affected the culture adopted by Ukrainian urban intellectuals and their building and mobilization techniques, which characterized a specific style of political activism. Because of its small numbers, the Ukrainian urban intelligentsia, as the activities of the populists suggest, at first actively sought the assistance of provincial intellectuals to win over the peasant masses and achieve its political goals. In fact, if we are to trust Kas'ianov, the provincial intelligentsia served as the messenger of nationalism, providing the necessary link between the politically active urban patriots and the passive Ukrainian peasantry.

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[53] "А тим це погоджувалося, що в тодішньому вкраїнському діячеві сиділо дві душі: одна українська, а друга – російська. Українську душу йому дав рід, почування любові до рідного краю, любові до своєї мови, до свого народу; російську душу давало йому російське життя, російська урядова служба, бюрократична прихильність до ласки, аку виявляло російське начальство. Ото його, тодішнього російського інтелігента, і тягло і туди, і сюди […]" (Hrinchenko 1882, 60).

[54] A more detailed analysis of this ambiguity one could find in the following

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authors: Shkandrij 2001, 30-34; Subtelny 1999 and Prizel 1999.

[55] Kas'ianov (1993) provides a number of good examples and therefore, I will refrain from doing so.

They were the people, who through the network of their personal relations disseminated among the common people the European notions of civil rights, economic emancipation, and political freedom. Provincial teachers, doctors, agronomists, and so on, directly worked with the Ukrainian peasantry to stimulate and arouse patriotic feelings, national pride, and loyalty to the native land (Kas'ianov 1993, 43). Nevertheless, as Hrinchenko's *Letters* revealed, tensions between the urban and provincial Ukrainian intelligentsia existed, and these were projected, at least prior to the arrival of the modernists on the cultural scene, onto various other distinctions, the most important of which, perhaps, was the opposition between the intelligentsia and its own 'People.'

Second, the writings of Ukrainian intellectuals also suggest that in the Ukrainian space another change played a more crucial role for the intelligentsia's intensified political activism and the spread of the Ukrainian national idea at the onset of the 20th century. This change assisted the conceptualization of Ukrainian culture as a political bond and a source of collective solidarity. Unfortunately, Kas'ianov only briefly touches upon it. In his attempt to find reasons explaining the increasing involvement of the Ukrainian intelligentsia in the struggle for political independence, especially from the 1900s on, the scholar points to the fact that by that time Ukrainian intellectuals *had learned how to create and maintain the continuity of national-cultural traditions* (Kas'ianov 1993, 24-25). In my view, this means that the Ukrainian intelligentsia became more aware of its own cultural history now engaging more actively in the re-writing and discursive re-invention of Ukrainian cultural continuity. The 'switch' towards such a more self-conscious attitude as part of the Ukrainian intelligentsia's *habitus* manifested itself in dispositions that required recurrent revisions of previously established cultural codes in order to expand the Ukrainian semiosphere while sustaining the originality of Ukrainian national culture. In this respect, the conflicts between different generations of Ukrainian intelligentsia were a vital element of the Ukrainian nation-building process. Therefore, the efforts to break away from previous enunciations of the nation in order to ensure the success of a particular construction or version of national culture constituted another crucial aspect of the Ukrainian intellectual social engineering. As Foster has argued, "the very notion of a nation with a fixed, 'given' cultural identity is a sign of the success of a whole array of practices naturalizing that identity [...] for all definitions of the national essence selectively ignore competing definitions" (cf. 1991, 238). From this point of view, it is not surprising that even though each new generation of Ukrainian intellectuals as a rule rebuked the inherited intellectual legacy, the strong relationship with past traditions ('the roots') was, nonetheless instrumental in defining the makeup of modern Ukrainian, and respectively national, culture (cf. also Kas'ianov 1993, 24).

Ukrainian Culture as a Political Tool: The Populist View

Ernest Gellner's theory of nationalism provides further elucidation of the significance of this shift. His key thesis is the idea that "an industrial [i.e., modern] society depends on a common culture" (qt. in Hall, J. 1995, 10) constructed or rather 'invented' and 'reinvented' in the course of massive social engineering as the principle place-holder of social integration and coherence upon which the nation is built (Gellner 1995, 3). According to Gellner, nationalism "[...] is based largely on the social reality of anonymous, atomized society." In his view, the most important mechanism of unification "was neither proletarian impoverishment and alienation, nor a universal market prosperity," but the new role of culture in modern society, which was to create social cohesion through "manipulation of ideas, and messages and people" (Gellner 1995, 3). Along the same lines, John Hall has observed that "many national leaders in the 20th century have been aware of the connection established by Gellner – that is, they are modernizers *consciously aware* of how to create an industrial society." As he points out, such modernizers "seek to break down the segments of the traditional order so as to create a common culture capable of integrating all citizens" (Hall 1995, 11; Italics mine). Thus, culture in the writings of the realists emerges as an indispensable political tool. Ivan Franko, in his article *Beyond the Limits of the Possible* very powerfully articulated this significant change in the mode of Ukrainian nation's justification (1900 [1996], 193-200). Following a long introduction, Franko directly asked a number of strategically imperative questions:

> What is the meaning of national revival? What material and spiritual spheres of life does it embrace, and what is to be excluded from it? What goals should or should not a national movement pursue? Which ideals are within the limits of the possible, and which go beyond? Should one accept these limits as something given and fixed, or should one, with one's head and hands, push them farther and farther away? (1900, 195).

For Franko the construction of national culture was not a matter of successfully defining the national character, but a process that involved also the 'planning' of its transmission and reproduction through the available socializing practices as "enduring personality traits" (cf. Foster 1991, 238).[56] In his view, culture helped above all to sustain collective identities over time and vast social spaces:

> One cannot deny that responsibly conducted literary and cultural work, even without mixing in active politics, in the course of time could win for Ukrainians some small political significance, and that all such idealistic movements, when spread to the masses, tend to reflect a greater number of economic and political interests as they take the people into an ever-widening arena of struggle (Franko 1900 [1996], 197-98).

Franko's interests in European socialist thought certainly helped him realize the significance of mass mobilization in the processes of nation-building. He conceptualized the national movement both as a struggle for economic emancipation and political liberation. As he pointed out: "The economic question is so important and so basic that it cannot be bypassed but must serve as the starting point of the political independence of any nation" (1900 [1996], 196). In addition, the writer thought of the Ukrainian national movement as a struggle for cultural 'naturalization,' which was another principal aspect of his political thinking. He interpreted it as a struggle for the Ukrainianization of the public space through the development and promotion of Ukrainian language, culture, local administration, and mass education. In his view, the notion of a 'non-political' culture was obsolete. While battling against the very concept of 'non-political' culture, the prominent Ukrainian writer articulated a fundamental principle of modern nationalist thought. In Geneviève Nootens' terms, this principle was "the infusion of culture with political content and the infusion of the political with cultural content" (1996 [1996], 242). Apparently, Franko's understanding of the national problem arose from awareness that the idea of nation "has an inescapable political dimension, because political institutions and governmental decisions are the essential means by which a people can ensure the flourishing and survival of a culture" (cf. Nootens 1996, 244). It is also important to note that Franko considered the national problem not as 'ideal' situation in reference to some indefinite future (as, for example Drahomanov did), but as the most pressing issue of his time.

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[56] This would explain his systematic efforts to conceptualize literature as a "service to the people, in assertion of that people's national and human rights" and his endorsement of individual artistict creativity as "a workaday routine, enobled by the writer's sense of obligation and concern with the topics of the day" (Pavlychko 1996, 84).

Franko conceptualized the role of political freedom as the precondition for individual self-realization, and the *raison d'être* behind the structural and semantic changes occurring in the Ukrainian social space. According to him, the end of the 19th century saw a novel way of reasoning about the driving forces of human nature, which resulted in a different understanding of what personal success, human history and progress meant. The idea of nation offered a mode of explaining the human individual existence as an endeavor to "invent, to search, to work hard, to serve and to associate" in the name of an ideal more vital and more meaningful: the social and political fulfillment of a people. The idea of nation, according to Franko, suggested "the synthesis of all idealistic striving, the building blocks holding all the bricks in place" that gave greater meaning and clear direction to all personal aspirations and efforts in approaching "the ideal of the full, unfettered, and unlimited […] life and development" (1900 [1996], 199). As he wrote: "A concern with anything outside the framework of the nation reveals either hypocrisy of people who under the cover of international ideas want to hide their striving for the domination of one nation over another, or the sick sentimentalism of fantasists who want to cover up with "universal" phrases their spiritual alienation from their own nation" (Franko 1900 [1996], 199).

In his view, the achievement of higher international aims would only be possible "when national strivings have been fulfilled and when national grievances and injustices have receded into historical memory" (Franko 1900 [1996], 199). But he was quite realistic in assessing the political and social 'readiness' of his compatriots to practice that ideal.

> The ideal of total national independence, political and cultural, lies for us, from our present perspective, *beyond the limits of the possible*. So be it! But let us not forget that thousands of paths leading to its achievement lie directly under our feet, and only our awareness of this ideal, our pursuit of it, will determine whether we follow paths leading to it or turn into other paths […] (Franko 1900 [1996], 200; italics mine).

Thus, as a political goal he set the cultivation of a profound attachment to the Ukrainian nation in his contemporaries: "We must feel this ideal in our hearts; we must use all our means and all our energy in order to approach it. Otherwise, it will not exist, and no mystical fatalism will create it, while the development of material relations like a blind machine, will trample and crush us" (Franko 1900 [1996], 200).

From the analysis conducted thus far, it should be clear that, as elsewhere in Europe, the concept of nation and the forging of Ukrainian national identity were "predicated on a condition of status-inconsistency among the relevant elite group (i.e., the Ukrainian intelligentsia), which resulted from the obfuscation, for one reason or another, of status distinctions and was accompanied by a profound sense of insecurity and anxiety" (cf. Greenfeld 1996b, 14). The spread of socialist and liberal-democratic ideas aided the formulation of a new set of political goals, which determined the nationalist dream-work of the Ukrainian intelligentsia in the early 20th century.

Within this conceptual framework, it seems also likely that the conflict between the populists-realists and the modernists marked the establishment of a national-political elite in the strict sense, as individuals who devoted themselves exclusively to the political expression of the Ukrainian nation. The appearance of the modernists on the cultural scene stimulated the formation of a hierarchical structure within the Ukrainian social continuum and led to the Ukrainian intelligentsia's internal stratification and diversification. One of the most pronounced manifestations of this divide was the openly articulated boundary between the 'mass' culture propagated by the populists and the 'elitist' Ukrainian culture advocated by the modernists. Working under the conditions of foreign rule, and lacking its own political structures, the Ukrainian intelligentsia thus engaged in the active construction of national culture as a placeholder of Ukrainianness, the unifying concept that manifested "the intelligentsia's mindful decision to recreate Ukrainian culture in its own image" (Ilnytzkyj 1994: 7). In that order, the public debates, represented above all by the heated polemic of the modernists and the realists-populists, centered on defining the essence of that culture, its roots and purposes, hence revealing the intellectuals' desire to institutionalize the 'common culture' as the source of homogeneity and political unity. In this sense, the process of Ukrainian culture's conceptualization as a political bond and the source of collective solidarity, commenced by the populists-realists, reached its logical next 'stage' in the modernist critical meta-discourse (*kul'turolohichnyi dyskurs*, Hundorova 1997, 32-74).

3. THE MODERNISTS AND THE NATION

This chapter examines the logic of identity definition and the transformation of Ukrainian 'people' into a nation by means of the modernist elites' social-historical imagining. Ukrainian modernists as architects of national identity came from a social group, discontented with its position in the Russian Empire and the manner in which contemporary society defined its social role and status. They arrived on the historical scene with an ambition for radical transformation of their society, an ambition that under the oppressive regime of the imperial government, particularly in the last two decades of the 19th century, strengthened the Ukrainian intelligentsia's aspirations for practicing cultural and political self-determination. In this sense, the modernist aesthetics since its inception was in effect a political position (cf. Geuss 2001, 45) that pursued the establishment of Ukrainian national culture as an agent of social transformation.

However, before turning my attention to the specific problem of Ukrainian modernist practices, let me briefly outline the chronology of the modernist movement as it evolved in Ukraine. Such chronologization would situate the ensuing discussion historically and help me emphasize some of the characteristic features of Ukrainian Modernism. In addition, it will reveal my attitude to the problems surrounding Ukrainian Modernism's periodization and definition, which is part of my attempt to offer no 'false' answers to the questions raised by the study of modernist practices in 'marginal' localities such as Ukraine and Bulgaria (Pavlychko 1999, 7). Finally, it is also an important element of my effort, *en rapport* with Bourdieu's self-reflexive method, to approach modernist practices from a historical and critical intellectual position that also sets up the common time frames that will allow a comparative study of the Bulgarian and Ukrainian Modernisms.

Ukrainian scholarship defines the time between the 1880s and 1920s as the period of Ukrainian Modernism, marking the 1910s as the heyday of its development (Ilnytzkyj 1992, Hundorova 1997, Pavlychko 1999). As Oleh S. Ilnytzkyj suggests, the lack of a common designator for this period in the critical literary practices at the time is a factor that for a long time created difficulties in setting the chronological boundaries of Ukrainian Modernism (1992: 113). In addition, different scholars approach the issue with different intentions and purposes, an intellectual strategy that quite naturally results in drawing significantly different chronologies of Ukrainian Modernism (Pavlychko 1999, 11-13). Here, I will speak of Ukrainian modernism as an all-encompassing cultural practice, defining it on the bases of its socio-political and national ideology. Although I am aware of the differences in the aesthetic platforms of Symbolists, Impressionists, etc., I do not consider these the most important facets of the modernist project in Ukraine. I see the struggle to attain aesthetic autonomy as an essential part of the processes of national signification and nation building. Thus, the aesthetic uses of literature in my interpretation render secondary to the main impetus of Ukrainian modernists, namely, the drive to create Ukrainian national high culture as a means of modernizing and further integrating their society.

For this reason, although it is possible to differentiate Futurism as a very powerful literary movement, perhaps one of the most clearly defined in terms of its distinctive aesthetic platform, I espouse the view that futuristic works were not significantly different than the writings of typical modernist theoreticians in promoting a Ukrainian identity that defined the Ukrainians as Europeans. Supportive of this view are the comments of Ilnytzkyj, who in one of his articles indicates that the futurists were attacked for "nihilism, *nationalism*, and cosmopolitanism" (Ilnytzkyj 1978: 467-475). In this sense, the aesthetic differences between Modernism and Avant-gardism in Ukraine are irrelevant to my discussion on the modernist national politics.

The present reading of Ukrainian modernism, which I am proposing, is conceptually very broad. Constructed from the perspective of a meta-discursive interdisciplinary analysis, its purpose is to provide a basis for describing the cultural practices of Ukrainian progressive intelligentsia at the beginning of the 20th century. I acknowledge the differences but prefer to dwell primarily on the similarities among the attempts of the Ukrainian creative intelligentsia to define the collective body and endorse its 'elitist' vision of Ukrainian national identity. In my view, it might be useful to divide this long period into two different stages, thus adapting the periodization already proposed by Hundorova (1997). This Ukrainian scholar recommends distinguishing between early and late Ukrainian modernism. According to Hundorova, the formation of the *Moloda Muza* literary circle in the early 1900s represents the first phase in the development of the Ukrainian modernist movement (she identifies it as 'early modernism'). The launching of the journal *Ukrains'ka khata* in 1909, she considers to be the beginning of the second 'tide,' or late Ukrainian modernism (95).

Inspired by Tratner's periodization of Modernism (1996), I here propose a slightly modified version of Hundorova's model, suggesting that the period of early Ukrainian modernism was characterized by the original inception of Ukrainian modernist literature and criticism, and the struggle to institutionalize the modernist *habitus* through the creation of national high culture; thus, both *Moloda muza* and *Ukrains'ka khata* will be studied together. As late Ukrainian modernism I identify the work of Mykola Khvyl'ovyi, Mykola Zerov and other proponents of Ukrainian modernism in the 1920s. In my view, the culture building initiatives of these intellectuals, and most particularly Khvyl'ovyi's cultural policy, marked another significant shift in the development of the modernist national vision. Strictly speaking, this second stage of Ukrainian Modernism never reached its 'natural end.' Abruptly disrupted, the tradition continued in literary practices of the Ukrainian diaspora (1940s-1950s), and even later in the 1990s, when the modernist aesthetics and literary experimentation was rediscovered and incorporated as part of the cultural and literary heritage of some contemporary Ukrainian authors (e.g., Iurii Andrukhovych, Myroslav

Myroshnychenko and others; cf. also Pavlychko 1999). In other words, Ukrainian modernism became a cultural practice that was further re-invented as an aesthetic, but also as an ideological disposition (*habitus*), and a cultural policy, recognized to represent the 'golden era' of Ukrainian modern cultural history.

To conclude, the division proposed here provides me with an opportunity to look at the subtle or not so subtle shifts in the conceptualization of the Ukrainian nation as the modernists tried to come to terms with the large-scale changes affecting the global community at the turn of the 20th century. Thus, early Ukrainian modernism was characterized by an attempt to transform the collective body into a spiritual entity and the definition of Ukrainian nation was enforced as a struggle to change the moral, ethical and above all, philosophical dispositions of both Ukrainian intelligentsia and the masses. The late modernists reacted to a different set of obstacles to the nationalization of their society. In principle, while agitating for the Europeanization and Ukrainianization of their society, Khvyl'ovyi, Zerov, and others continued the practices of their predecessors (Ukrainka, Sriblians'kyi, Ievshan, and others), insisting on the creation of a high Ukrainian national culture. At the same time, they adjusted these to the new socio-political and historical conditions (Sovietization), once again altering the rules according to which the local modernist *habitus* operated. In this sense, they introduced changes in the originally conceived intellectual project. I will look more closely at such differences in the concluding section of this chapter. However, let me state beforehand that during the late 1920s, especially in the writings of Khvyl'ovyi, I see Ukrainian modernism emerging as a robust *Ideologiekritik* and a potent political technology of resistance and dissidence.

3.1. Nation Building and the Aesthetization of Culture

The social change pursued by the Ukrainian modernists was predicated on the thematic emancipation of art and literature from economic and social constraints and the empowerment of Ukrainian writers, artists, and critics through recognition of their expertise and authority as producers of values. Consequently, the constitution of the literary and artistic field as an independent and fundamental dimension of modern society manifested itself in the Ukrainian creative intelligentsia's pretension to control the instruments of legitimation in cultural production and impose its ideals and aesthetic dispositions. At the turn of the century, poets and writers like Mykola Voronyi, Pavlo Tychyna, Lesia Ukrainka, Natalia Kobryns'ka, Vasyl' Stefanyk, Ol'ha Kobylians'ka, Mykhailo Kotsiubyns'kyi, etc., launched a new type of aesthetic, seeking to establish Ukrainian art and literature as an independent cultural institution, not subjected to any immediate social and political goals. But while dreaming of such autonomy, they in fact worked to expand the national space for cultural production in the Ukrainian language. The process of autonomization of the literary and artistic field, was thus, entangled with the forging of the Ukrainian nation and the transformation of Ukrainian culture into a national institution. The task they tried to accomplish was not simply to open space for the recognition of art as an autonomous human practice, equivalent to other differentiated activities such as politics, science, law, education and so on. More significantly, they attempted to naturalize and affirm art as an exclusively national enterprise, subordinated to no other power but the authority of Ukrainian intellectuals. As Ilnytzkyj points out, the true essence of Ukrainian modernism "inheres not in the denial of social imperatives, but in raising them from class concerns to national ones" (1992: 116).

Ilnytzkyj's remark is very important because it suggests that different social forces propelled the formation of an autonomous artistic and literary field in Ukraine. Under the conditions of colonial dependency and discrimination, Ukrainian modernists, in tune with the pretences of French intellectuals like Baudelaire and Flaubert, expressed their claims for cultural leadership through the rhetoric of pure aesthetic. But, the aesthetization of Ukrainian culture did not produce the same results as in France, or in other West European countries where, as Jusdanis has argued, "under the general process of differentiation, […] the arts were unified under one concept (aesthetic autonomy) and ascribed a compensatory function: to provide a space of deliverance from the consequences of social differentiation" (1991, 103). In fact, in the Western nation-states, art evolved into an autonomous institution' in order "[to transcend] social differentiation by devising unalienated experiences" (Jusdanis 1991, 103-104). Respectively, literature and the arts were assigned the task of "deliver[ing] the citizens of modernity into a utopian realm of undifferentiated unity where they could transcend the problems of their fragmented society" (Jusdanis 1991, 105).

However, in Ukraine, like in Greece or Bulgaria, the situation was different for there the experiences of social differentiation did not conform to the model of western industrial ('bourgeois') societies. In short, the modernist quests here were not inspired by social alienation but unsolved national questions. This is clearly suggested by the statement of Khvyl'ovyi, one of the most distinguished ideologues of Ukrainian modernism. He wrote that "[...] in the name of solving the national problem, Ukrainian art must, in the near future [...] pioneer a new artistic style [...]" thus, obviously linking the modernists' search of new poetics, and their desire to attain the highest aesthetic values with their efforts to create and express the national mind (qt. in Ilnytzkyj 1991: 261-262).

M. Sriblians'kyi, another prominent Ukrainian modernist, voiced similar ideas before Khvyl'ovyi. In an article entitled "*Pro Domo Sua*," the theorist of Ukrainian modernism confessed that Ukrainian nationalism was the ideal inspiring contemporary intelligentsia to produce cultural artifacts epitomizing the completeness of the Ukrainian national existence by representing the interests of the integrated Ukrainian society and not just partial (primarily peasant) social and political interests (1909d: 421). Implicitly comparing the ambitions and dispositions of Ukrainian modernists with the cultural attitudes of the preceding generations, which in his view, developed "[as] impotent [*mertvyi*]" and limited nationalism, the critic passionately argued the distinctive status of Ukrainian modernists, defining their stance as the most profound form of Ukrainian nationalism (1909d: 421).

In another article, entitled "*Po mizh susidamy: Ukraintsvo i velykorusy*" (Among Neighbors: Ukrainians and Russians), the prominent modernist critic reiterated the same idea. Reacting harshly to the Russian ethnic discrimination and coercion, Sriblians'kyi restated the main principles of the version of Ukrainian nationalism espoused by him. In essence, what he advocated was antipopulism, a cult of aesthetism and individualism, and uncompromising cultural nationalism, pursuing the creation of a high Ukrainian national culture to set the foundation of the future political nation (1909b: 64; cf. also Shkandrji 2001, 199). Thus, he denounced the "apathetic cultural nationalism" (*mliave kul'turnytstvo*) of the realist-populists, and firmly put in place the ethnic boundary with the Russians, decisively refusing to negotiate the integrity of the Ukrainian identity. The modernist openly declared his ambition to "defend (*vyrazno staty v oboronu*)" the completeness of the national exitence, working to meet the requirements for the free and independent development of the Ukrainian nation (Sriblians'kyi 1909b: 64).

Sriblians'kyi's and Khvyl'ovyi's statements certainly suggest that Ukrainian modernism evolved as a form of cultural nationalism (cf. Hutchinson 1992, 1994, 1999, 2000), opposing both the attitudes of the assimilated Ukrainian elites and the political nationalism of the Russian state. In principle, I propose that it developed as a movement that sought the nation's moral ressurection by means of instilling West European democratic and liberal-humanist ideas while attempting to articulate the essential principles of a Ukrainian civil society. In this sense, Ukrainian modernism was a political project because its adherents fought for the recognition of national rights, arguing that these were fundamental social and political human rights, thereby demanding the acknowledgment of Ukrainian nationality as an essential aspect of an independent democratic state-order (cf.

Kapustians'kyi 1910: 466-75).[1] Despite the fact that their interests were 'veiled' by the typical modernist 'disinterested gaze' (the art for art's sake motto), it is apparent that their ambition was to valorize Ukrainian high culture as a factor in the pursuit of justice and autonomy while elaborating a critique of the existing social and political conditions, implicitly or explicitly urging for the democratization and liberalization of the Ukrainian society. Interesting in this regard is a letter sent to Drahomanov by A. Kryms'kyi on May 15, 1890. In this letter, the modernist writer complained: "How can you compel us to love those, who even in their liberalism do not consider us a nation? What kind of common action is possible here […] How can and ought Ukrainians to join with Russians (*moskaliamy*) who are hostile toward them in order to win rights and freedoms (including, of course, national rights), without drowning in the 'general Russian sea'?" (qt. in Shkandrij 2001, 199).

From this perspective then, Ukrainian modernist practices emerge as a locus of opposition to the Russian state (cf. Shkandrij's similar interpretation, 2001, 197-217). In my view, the belief that aesthetic autonomy was possible only in a self-determined and free society, i.e., a Ukrainian nation-state, informed the ideological position that incited the Ukrainian modernists' quest for social prestige and their struggle to establish themselves as the superior cultural authority in the Ukrainian social space. Consequently, in the modernist "*kul'turolohichnyi dyskurs*" (Hundorova 1997, 32-74), I see at play a key tenet of modern liberalism, namely the understanding that "the political sphere […] specifies the morality which characterizes the common life of the citizens" (cf. Nootens 1996, 245), a conviction that also dictated their engagement in ideological conflicts over the definition and articulation of a Ukrainian national ideal.

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[1] I will consider this particular text in greater details later.

As Nootens has argued, the common morality established via the political sphere is "not a mere *modus vivendi*: the principle norms and principles on which citizens agree play a motivational role, which depends on the conception of the citizen that defines the political ideal" (1996, 245). In addition, as she contends, this public moral position had to be declared from a disinterested perspective, that is, a perspective that did not represent the self-interests of any particular group (Nootens 1996, 246). In this respect, the aesthetic principle of 'art for art's sake' was adopted in the Ukrainian modernist rhetoric as an appropriate strategy to disguise the national interests of the Ukrainian modernists, who aspired the creation of a national culture that would integrate all Ukrainians and establish a source of political power by providing the discursive means for imagining the sovereign Ukrainian nation-state.

A case in point is Sriblians'kyi's abstract representation of the 'homeland,' which suggests a different fashion of thinking about Ukraine and its people. In his article "*National'nist i mystetstvo*" (Nationality and Art), the aesthetization of the 'homeland' enforces identification with a symbolical domain that opened an ideal space for a complete and harmonious, *primarily aesthetic experience* of the nation: "Ukraine is a site of a certain combination of lines, treasures, forms, colors of the sky, reflections of water, rustling of fields, breadth of a resonanting steppe; it is a combination of such aesthetic impressions, influences, shapes, which create the Ukrainian nationality, spirit, worldview."[2] Ukrainian nationality accordingly was affirmed as an aesthetic and spritiual principle to bring the community of conationals together through the shared culture. Thus, the modernist legitimization of Art as an independent social institution served the "battle cry for inventing an entirely new image of Ukrainianness" (Ilnytzkyj 1994: 7). Respectively, the modernists envisioned Art as an ideal realm where the Ukrainian people could experience their desired solidarity.

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[2] "Україна - це місце певної комбинації ліній, скарб, форм, кольорів неба, відблисків води, шуму гаїв, ширини шуми степів - це комбінація таких естетичних вражінь, вплівів, формацій як творять українську національність, дух, світогляд" (1910c: 375).

As Kenneth Ferguson has argued, with the 'politicizing' of aesthetic notions came also the realization that "what have traditionally been isolated preferences are in fact highly dependent on the positioning of the social structures that locate the individual. Aesthetic affiliations, displayed in taste, demonstrate solidarity with a social group" (1996, 180). In this sense, the concept of Ukrainian nation in the modernist discourses was implemented as a symbolic order where the collective and the individual would ultimately blend. National identity, respectively, was seen as an internalized collective behavior resulting from one's emotional response to, and identification with, the collective symbols.

Ukrainka's letter to M. Pavlyk, dated May 10, 1903 provides interesting evidence in this regard. Here the famous feminist writer confessed:

> I found depressing your *Umstand* that I must disavow all politics. I'd like to know in more detail how am I supposed to do this? Do you really expect me to live in even greater silence in Galicia than in Ukraine? If so, this is a terrible sacrifice of one's soul. Perhaps, I'd be able to avoid this by not becoming a member of local parties because I don't have the talent for the former while the latter is of little interest to me. I think, that as a writer I am more useful if I take stands completely independently, even if I do it all alone. But there is no way I would be able to disavow all politics in literature or in my relationship to the centre not only because my convictions but also my temperament would not allow it. Morally I cannot accept that the political chasm (historical, as Kulish called it) is a real chasm. As long as I cannot disavow the knowledge of Ukraine's absolute slavery, I cannot – it is not in my strenghth – to disavow that which I did not disavow under harsher circumstances. I would have to disavow my poems, my most sincere words because to speak them and to place them on paper – while disavowing that which they call others to do – would be shameful.[3]

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[3] Приким здався мені один, виставлений вже у Вас *Умстанд*, що я мусила б 'скинутись всякої політики.' Я хотіла б знати докладніше, як я маю се розуміти? Невже, что в Галичині я мала б ще тихше жити, ніж на Україні? Коли так, то се страшна жертва душі. Я ще, може, могла б не мішатися до особистою агітацією, не вступала б в члени краєвих партій, б до одного я не почуваю в собі талану, а другим мало інтересуюсь, бо думаю, що, яко літератор, я ліпше зроблю, коли вступатиму зовсім незалежно, хоч нехай і

The essentially different dynamics of Ukrainian modernism then surfaces clearly. In the context of the specific social, political and cultural conditions that determined the formation of the Ukrainian nation and the development of Ukrainian national literature at the outset of the 20th century, it seems that the modernist process of literary use entailed also social and political processes that called for the articulation of a particular version of Ukrainian national identity. The Ukrainian modernists engaged not simply in creating a national high culture but, to put it in Greenfeld's terms, in the promotion of an 'elitist' and 'civic' conception of the nation (1996b: 103-104, 107) that clearly supported the Ukrainian intelligentsia's struggle for political self-determination. Here I would also like to cite Sarah Coarse, who insightfully observes that, "one of the central roles of a national literature [an by extension, national culture as well] is to assist the 'construction' and 'invention' of the nation. [...] The nation and its cultural expression in literature [and art] underlies, unifies, and makes meaningful the *political formation of the state*" (1997, 22; italics mine). Considered in this light, Ukrainian modernism developed as a movement that tried to make meaningful the formation of a Ukrainian national state. In short, through the abstract and highly symbolical modern aesthetic the modernists campaigned for Ukrainian political freedom and self-determination.

It is not surprising then that the modernist positon was affirmed as a liberal (or at least liberalizing) position as well. The Ukrainian modernists themselves evaluated it as an explicitly rebellious and non-conformist social-cultural practice. As Sriblians'kyi admited:

одиноко. Але скинутися 'всякої політики' в літературе і в моех зносинах з метрополією ніяк неможу, бо не тільки переконання, але темперамент мій того не дозволяє, а ще не дозволяє, знаете що?дядьків повіт. ...

Мені морально неможливо признати політичну прірву (історичну, як казав Куліш) за прірву реальну, і поки не скинулася спогаду про абсолютно невільну Україну, я не можу, не сила моя скинутися того, чого досі не скинулась при гірших умовах. Тоді треба скинутись мені і моєї поезії, моїх найщирших слів, бо вимовляти і ставити їх на папері, скинувшись того діла, на яки вони кличуть іншах, мені буде сором (Ukrainka 1966, 48-49).

> Modernism in Ukrainian criticism refers to that current of *literary-social thought* that appeared in *Ukrains'ka khata*. To a certain degree this is true. [It was] Modernism, but only in the sense of 'newness,' because *khatianstvo* never had anything to do with *decadence* in literature, nor with Modernism in religion. Our Modernism was a *reappraisal of the Ukrainian movement*, and our relationship to Ukrainian history, a reappraisal of our relationship to our revolutionary contemporaries, who created the revolution of 1905, a reppraisal of our liberation ideology and the search for *a new ideology of liberation* (Sriblians'kyi 1955, qt. in Ilnytzkyj 1994: 5; emphasis in original).

From this perspective, the cultural production of Ukrainian modernists was used to construct national identity in an intricate way. On the one hand, it undid cultural identities, such as the all-Russian one promoted by the Russian imperial government, or the 'demotic' one, based on the folk tradition, and defended by the representatives of Ukrainian populism and Ukrainophilism, who saw the peasant population and its locally diverse cultural practices as the hallmarks of Ukrainian cultural distinctiveness. On the other hand, it produced and maintained cultural identities in opposition to Europe, for Ukrainian modernists were suspicious toward the uncritical adaptation of models coming from the West. Perhaps, one of the first and most interesting discourses communicating the Ukrainian modernist intelligentsia's ambivalent attitude towards West European influences is Kobryns'ka's article "*Symvolizm v narodnii pisni*" (Kobryns'ka 1958, 385-88). In this text, she appealed to Ukrainian writers not to look for 'foreign gods' when the Ukrainian folk culture provided such treasures. Kobryns'ka advised her compatriots not to wrench themselves away from their 'roots,' and escape into foreign worlds, to be aware not to lose the distinctive character of the national genius. By the same token, Ilnytzkyj's critical review of the editorial policy of *Ukrains'ka khata* suggests that Ukrainian modernists insisted on the creation of indigenuous modernist forms. The scholar acknowledges that "[a]lthough generally open-minded and cosmopolitan in their orientation, [...] [Ukrainian modernists] did stray from time to time into obscurantism when they [...] searched for the 'real Ukrainian style'." His conclusion is that "[i]n the process they exhibited suspicion and even antagonism toward 'foreign' things, especially when they were Russian, or radically formalist in nature" (Ilnytzkyj 1994: 15).

The Ukrainian modernist revolt then, in my view was motivated by the creative intelligentsia's desire to undercut, as Shkandrij has proposed, both the "colonial discourse and the national counterdiscourse" (2001, 198). In a sense, the modernists in Ukraine tried hard to define their own cultural program, and to outline their own vision of what the Ukrainian modern nation should be. The underlying premise was that a neighboring culture cannot serve this purpose, and as Ilnytzkyj writes, they aspired to preserve and cultivate "a high national culture," one that will remain "authentically Ukrainian" in its nature, but also will fit the Western standards of literary and aesthetic excellence (1994: 13-15). As a result, they found themselves in a hard place, having to decide on the principles sustaining Ukrainian cultural originality. The anxiety over the 'roots' of the Ukrainian national culture clearly surfaced when the problem became a focal point of public discussions, social tensions and conflicts in the beginning of the 20th century (e.g., the Modernist-Populist debate).

Pierre Bourdieu has drawn attention to the fact that the struggles to establish the autonomy of art, i.e., the formation of the literary field, cannot be analyzed independently but have to be considered in relation to the "field of power" (Bourdieu 1995, 60-61) as it had emerged in a particular historical location.[4] In the light of his theory, I argue that the attempts of Ukrainian modernists to assert themselves as "fully fledged members of the world of art, and above all those who claim to occupy the dominant positions in it" (Bourdieu 1995, 60-61) stemmed from the need which Bourdieu identifies as "a need to manifest their independence with respect to external powers, political or economic" (ibid.). More significantly, however, the modernists in Ukraine were driven by a conviction that the success of their revolt was determined by their ability to liberate themselves from the Russian cultural dominance on the one hand. On the other hand, in their view, achieving a high degree of autonomy also meant that they had to liberate themselves from the 'oppression' of the locally established cultural traditions. For this reason, the entanglement of political, social, cultural, and strictly literary interests specific to the Ukrainian modernist national program appears to be less surprising. In fact, I tend to think that it was crucial for the success of their project.

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[4] A more detailed definition of Bourdieu's concept of the 'field of power' one can find in his work *Language and Symbolic Power* (1999, 171-202).

Moreover, I consider it important to place the modernist program properly within the complex network of social positions, and positions of power, which at the turn of the century collided in the Ukrainian social/cultural space. A glance at the history of Ukrainian political organizations reveals an interesting configuration of conflicting political and cultural positions. Many of the Ukrainian modernists became members of overtly political societies, and parties such as the Taras Brotherhood (*Bratstvo Tarasivtsiv*), founded in 1891 by Kyiv University students, or the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party, initiated in 1900 by young enthusiasts from Kharkiv University, who, as Magocsi states, "did not want to join the all-Russian revolutionary parties" (1996, 378). In 1905, the Revolutionary Ukrainian party changed its name to Ukrainian-Social Democratic Party. Volodymyr Vynnychenko, one of the most prominent modernist writers in Ukraine, was not only a member of the party, but also became a leading figure in the independent Ukrainian government during the short period of Ukrainian statehood between 1917-1920. Plainly put, the political space in Ukrainian lands at the turn of the century accommodated the following positions: "the national socialist, anational socialist, and nationalist political orientations" (Magosci 1996, 379). In this context, Ukrainian modernists identified "Populism, Ukrainophilism, Little Russianism, and ethnographic tradition [i.e., the essentialized oral culture]" as " 'primitive' ills that had to be destroyed" in order to build a modern Ukrainian national culture (Ilnytzkyj 1994: 11-12). Thus, I believe, it is safe to say that Ukrainian modernists were most active in promoting westernization and modernization in Ukrainian lands by attempting to enforce acceptance of the Ukrainian national identity, modern lifestyles, mentality, and aesthetic tastes.

3.2. Contested Identities: Re-inventing the Ukrainian 'People'

One of the first "modernizing offensives" (cf. Wagner 1994, 20-25) conducted by the Ukrainian modernists was the rejection of 'people' (*narod*), a discursive construct of previous generations of intellectuals that identified the Ukrainian *demos* as a collective entity, the core of which constituted the Ukrainian peasantry. They focused on designing a national identity in resistance to versions developed by the previous generations of patriots who modeled Ukrainian national culture on the rudiments of the vernacular (folk) culture and, in sympathy with other groups, imagined a civic nation elsewhere. By contrast, the modernists aspired to create a culture that would transcend "the ethnic realities of the society by the civic principle of the political domain" (cf. Schnapper 1996, 233). Thus, they engaged in the creation of a national literature, and by extension culture, capable of integrating *all citizens* of the future Ukrainian state (polity). Interesting in this respect is the following statement by Kapustians'kyi, who acknowledged that national culture was "the cement" that would hold Ukrainian society together by ensuring the dissemination of elite culture to the masses.[5] According to this Ukrainian intellectual, the national idea obliterated class distinctions and social differences because it was "the permanent embodiment of those cultural-democratic ideals that all of humanity aspired to."[6] As noted previously, Sriblians'kyi also expressed similar ideas, insistently articulating the need for achieving the completeness of national existence through the creation of a national high culture. In his article "*Pro Domo Sua*" the critic plainly stated:

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[5] "скріпляючім цементом, тим мостом, по которому культура повинна перейти от *буржуазії до народа*, і стати таким чином спільним скарбом для усіх верств суспільства" (Kapustians'kyi 1909: 384-6).

[6] "[…] постійним […] втіленням тих культурно-демократичних завданів

"*Natsionalizm musyt' buty universal'nym, a ne klasovym*" (Nationalism must be universal and not based on class distinctions). Therefore, he demanded that realism and naturalism be abandoned as ineffective artistic methods to convey the profoundness and wholeness of the national experience (Sriblians'kyi 1909d: 421).

Within this interpretative framework, the modernists criticized the romantic as well as the populist-realist understanding of the concept of nation because they saw it as collectivistic and reductive. It built the 'image' of the nation as "a collective individual, endowed with a will and interests of its own, which are independent of and take priority over the wills and interests of human individuals who compose the nation" (cf. Greenfeld, 1996a: 104; Franko 1900, 199-200). Consequently, they reacted negatively to the populist cultural program, elaborated on the premises of European Enlightenment ideas for mass education, social equality, and political freedom, which pursued the creation of a democratic mass culture (*prostonarodna*, 'culture for the regular people') to express the unique social-historical experiences of Ukrainian people. To illustrate this point, let me cite here Ukrainka, who criticized Franko's ideological stand because, in her view, his ultimate goal was the popularization of the national ideal among the Ukrainian peasantry. She stressed that he interpreted "the term [nation] not in its European but in its populist sense: 'peasants' " (Ukrainka 1977, 21).

Clearly, for the modernists this was a very limited and already outdated objective. Consequently, in their view the populist-realist politics of culture failed to produce adequate and effective institutions of nation building and nation-signification. They rejected the populist conceptual model of the nation associated with it, because it operated in a regional rather than a global (predominantly Eurocentric) geopolitical frame, attempting to assert a Ukrainian presence within the Russian cultural and political space. The 'high' Ukrainian literature, and by extension culture, which the modernists in Ukraine proposed to create was a

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до котрих простує людкість" (Kapustians'kyi 1909: 384-6).

necessity, which they felt was dictated by the need for establishing the Ukrainian nation as a partner in the international exchange of symbolic goods. Operating in opposition to the imperial political nationalist discourse, the modernists acutely felt their 'statelessness' as a condition that they had to overpower by offering a space where the unity and singularity (uniqueness) of the Ukrainian nation could be experienced freely. This motivated their desire to participate in the Ukrainian political life.

The shift in perspective from local to global was an important change that the modernists introduced in Ukraine. Interestingly, their position resonated with the imaginings of Mykola Mikhnovs'kyi considered by many to be the "father" of Ukrainian political nationalism (Kas'ianov 1993, 101). In my view, Mikhnovs'kyi voiced clearly the new ideological framework that instigated the political orientation of Ukrainian progressive intelligentsia. In his booklet *An Independent Ukraine*, published in 1900, he wrote:

> [...] it must be recognized that whenever any nation desires to attain independent and sovereign statehood, it can do so only when acknowledged on the basis of international relations.
>
> When it is recognized that *the unhampered development of an individual is possible only in a state whose goal is the cultivation of individuality, then it will become quite obvious that state sovereignty is the main determinant of the existence of a nation and the national ideal is realizable only within the sphere of international recognition* (202; italics mine).[7]

A few of Petro Karmans'kyi's comments also reveal the Ukrainian modernists' different international orientation. His confessions underscore the symbolical function of Europe as an embodiment of progress and high cultural standards, as well as a resource for disrupting the Ukrainian traditional societal order and invigorating Ukrainian *belles lettres*. "We felt that Europe was racing forward, whereas we, Galicians, were sitting rock-solid on the granite foundations of a traditional conservative way of life, cheap patriotism and primitivism! We were no longer enthused by noble phrases trivialized by daily use: 'Work alone will free us from slavery!' and 'Acquire knowledge my brothers, think, read!' "[8] Karmans'kyi admitted that the poetry and prose created by the early modernists (the authors, who formed the circle *Moloda muza* in 1906) was a reaction to the social stagnation, caused by the national indifference and failure of the Ukrainian conservative intellectuals to acknowledge the necessity for changes:

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[7] Page citations refer to the abridged English translation in Lindheim and Luckyj

> We were engulfed in our native world up to our very ears but felt more keenly than others our illness and suffered because of it. We were irate. No wonder that we longingly turned our gaze to the West and that some of us, like a drowning person, stretched our hands out to the poetry of "Young Poland," which was rehabilitated and cleansed from false romanticism. [Such gestures] estranged us even more from the general public, which suffered from hyperthrophy of provincial patriotism, [was] devoted to a cult of 'saints,' embroidered shirts, and false pathos, [was] isolated from the cultured world and speculated at the patriotic bazaar.[9]

The point is that, although the comparisons with Europe were not a newly introduced mobilization strategy, for as I have already noted Drahomanov too operated from an Eurocentric perspective, the differences between his and the modernist position is clear. Ukrainian modernists refused to see Russia as the mediator in their cultural exchange with the West, turning their gaze directly to Europe in search of blueprints for Ukrainian society's modernization. The effect

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1996, 201-215.

[8] " […] відчували, що Европа женеться вперед, тоді, як ми, галичани, сидимо скам'янілі на гранітних основах традиційної побутовщини, 'неньковатости,' примітивізму […] Нас уже не захоплювали стривіалізовані щоденним ужитком канонічні крилаті фрази: 'праця єдина з неволі нас вирве' […] 'і учітеся, братти мої, думайте, читайте!' " (Karmans'kyi 1936, 114).

[9] "[…] по самі виха стриміли в нашому рідному світі і тільки сильніше загалу відчували нашу хворобу, і боліли з цього приводу. І були озлоблені. Що ж дивного, що ми тужно звертали погляди на Захід і що дехто з нас, мов потопаючий, витягав руки до оновленої і очищеної з фальшивого патріотичного романтизму поезії 'Молодої Польщи'? […] ще більше відштовхували від нас загал, що хорував гіпертрофією загумінкового патріотизму, в якому […] покутував дух […] культу 'святих' вишиваних сорочок, і нещирого патосу […] відсталість від культирного світу і спекуляцію на патріотичному базарі" (Karmans'kyi 1936, 114-115).

of this semantic shift in *fin-de-siècle* Ukraine was analogous to a mental revolution.

From this point of view, the modernist position developed on the premises of what Nootens has defined as "rooted cosmopolitanism" (1996, 612), a position that directly challenged the existing social order by recognizing the significance of nationality not as an ethnic but as a cultural-political category. I think that Ol'ha Kobylians'ka's life and work offer a prime example of this phenomenon. Educated in a German-speaking environment, she made an effort to learn Ukrainian, and published in this language her experimental literary prose. Her choice reveals the new mode of conceptualizing Ukrainian culture and identity, a mode that represented "not simply an historic shift in style and sensibility (i.e., from Realism to Modernism), but a total realignment of Ukrainian culture along European lines" (Ilnytzkyj 1994: 7). In this sense, it is interesting to note that Kobylians'ka sustained her interest in Ukrainian folklore throughout her life. As she confessed in her 1903 autobiography, under the influence of Petko Iu. Todorov (1879-1916),[10]

> I wanted to abandon the old path of literary modernism [...] and turn onto [Todorov's] path, which seemed to me the proper and only path for preserving the true art and poetry of the folk, the folk character, unchanged by hyper-culture, but *conveyed solely through the prism of fresh talent*, like folk poetry dressed in melodies, for *the whole world to admire its folk treasures, heretofore barely noticed* (qt. in Tarnawsky 2001, vi; italics mine).

Essentially, what Kobylians'ka's life and work symbolize is the effort of the Ukrainian modernist intelligentsia to Europeanize and modernize their culture through "the integration of European values into Ukrainian spiritual life" (Pavlychko 1996, 85). Ukrainka's culture-building program, in my view, pursued a similar objective. Like Pavlychko, I read her writings as a plea for "the Europeanization of Ukrainian culture" (1996, 85). It seems that for both Ukrainka and Kobylians'ka, the notion of Europeanization represented the desired social order that secured the Ukrainian nation's free and democratic development and allowed one to choose to belong to the Ukrainian nation rather than to be 'born' into it. To a certain degree then, the notion of Europeanization for the Ukrainian modernists signified an ideal that stimulated the introduction of a different set of national identifying markers, namely the civic criteria of national membership reinforcing a willful attachment to the nation based on one's recognition of the value of his or her cultural belonging.

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[10] Todorov was one of the first Bulgarain modernists. He is famous for his modernist re-interpretations of Bulgarian folk motifs and themes.

Greenfeld has pointed out that "the civic criteria of national membership acknowledge the freedom of the individual members, which the collectivistic definition of the nation denies" (1996a: 104-105). The modernist articulation of the Ukrainian nation, in this regard, presents an intriguing amalgam of both civic and ethnic criteria, ultimately seeking a resolution of the modernist intelligentsia's dilemma to assert itself as the modernizing cultural elite of an oppressed, stateless, divided and socially underdeveloped people. Tovkachevs'kyi's "*Pryiateli i vorohy narodu*" (Friends and Enemies of the People) is a case in point. In this text, the modernist critic wrote: "There is something greater than the Ukrainian people, namely, *ukrainstvo*. [...] [We must] preserve our existence as a cultural-national complex. *We can be a modern nation through culture*, not through [...] ethnographic characteristics, not through our common roots, not through our common traditions" (1913: 129, 130; qt. in Ilnytzkyj 1994: 13; italics mine).

The dilemma faced by the Ukrainian modernists manifested itself in their anxiety and intolerance with respect to earlier definitions of national identity and culture. The modernists saw these as inadequate for meeting the need of pursuing Ukrainian nation's cultural and political self-determination, and above all its international recognition. Thus, I believe that, for example, Sriblians'kyi's antipopulism, and more specifically, his biting criticism of the populist articulation of the Ukrainian nation, elaborated in articles such as "*Nova era*"

(New era, 1911b), "*Apoteoza prymitivnoi kul'tury*" (Apotheosis of Primitive Culture, 1912a), and "*Z hromads'koho zhyttia*" (From the social Life, 1913) in fact argued for the construction of the Ukrainian nation as a civil and cultured society rather than an ethnographically defined and historically continuous genealogical community. At the same time, as Kobylians'ka's concerns indicate, some modernist writers felt intensely the unfeasibility of 'abandoning' the 'peasant roots,' thus being entrapped in a deeply conflictual situation.

In this sense, the modernists carried on political claims concerned not with descent but based on a cultural-political principle (national high culture) that appealed to "the empathic understanding of impartiality emphasizing that many people do strongly value their cultural belonging, not only because it provides them with meaningful options about how to lead their lives, but because they value the sense of a shared identity" (cf. Nootens 1996, 255). As a result, one of the most pressing questions the Ukrainian modernists had to address was to provide the imaginary space for the articulation of 'shared national experiences,' i.e., to create the common national culture that would make possible for the large and diverse Ukrainian-speaking population to experience its solidarity despite the fact that most members of the nation would never meet one another (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 29). This meant that Ukrainian modernists had to re-create the national master-narratives that would imbue the national identity with "such an aura of factuality that it [appeared] to be real unquestionable, and an *intrinsic element of personal identity*" (cf. Geerz, qt. in Foster 1991, 237; italics mine). Sriblians'kyi's statement that Ukrainian nationality, "in its social, ethical, and aesthetic content creates a vast life world [allowing one] to experience satisfaction and completeness in her individual existence" is typical in this sense. Moreover, as the critic acknowledged, "In this new world [national culture] […] we also detect the manifestation of those inner desires that require the individualization of all life."[11]

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[11] "з її соціяльними, етичним, естетичним змістом творіть величезний світ життя, щоб відчувати необхидну повноту і задоволеність своїм

In this way, he spelled out the principle of individualism as the foundation of the national culture-building project.

The Ukrainian modernists felt compelled to re-establish the national token-symbols of public culture, and above all, to promote the self-image of Ukrainians as a modern nation, affirming the place of a non-existent national state in the sphere of international relations. Unlike the Greeks, however, the Ukrainians did not possess an illustrious past, a history, which the European nations themselves sought to acknowledge as a constitutive part of their cultural heritage. In this respect, the Ukrainians were deprived of a chance to inscribe their national identity in "the identity formations of superpowers" (cf. Jusdanis 1991, 14), thus compelling Europe to acknowledge their struggle for national self-determination. They, like the Bulgarians, and other people from 'the margins,' had to look for different options. Ultimately, as I will try to show later, they saw the proposed Europeanization of their society and the creation of a high national culture that endorsed the moral, political, social, and aesthetic values of the Ukrainian intelligentsia as a means to promote Ukrainian national identity and to gain international recognition and prestige.

In my view, the shift from establishing the *Volk* /peasant as the bearer of cultural values to affirming the intelligentsia as such was an outcome of the progress of capitalist development and utilization of European liberal-democratic ideas. Through the writings of the modernists, especially the early modernists, the values of the intelligentsia were acknowledged as the core values of society, and respectively of the nation. As Kas'ianov points out, the image of the *intelligent*, as it was negotiated in the Ukrainian historical space at the turn of the century, rendered a highly educated (cultured) and refined individual, an artistic genius, the creator of ethical and spiritual values who embedded in herself the culture of

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істнуванням. В такім новім світі, в новій сфері ми бачимо пролв того змагання внутрішньої душі людської, яке веде все житте до індівидуалізації [...]" (Sriblians'kyi 1910c: 738).

her society and all that this society represented (1993, 21). Typical in this sense is Ukrainka's response to Franko's article "*Z kintsem roku*" (The End of the Year, 1896). In her discourse, the modernist writer criticized Franko's national-cultural program as too limiting and ineffective (Ukrainka 1977, 21-22). Renouncing his exclusive focus on the peasantry, she argued: "If in Galicia the peasantry is our target group, here in Ukraine *we have to first create an intelligentsia.* We have to return to the nation its 'brain.' If that does not happen, there is no one to work with. Then, together with [Western Ukrainians] we have to obtain those rights [and freedoms] that the Galicians have gained by means of foreign help."[12]

Essentially, the values of the Ukrainian modernist intelligentsia were defined in reference to the new European humanitarian agenda of individualism, political autonomy and civil rights, as well as the Western idea of 'art for art's sake' *(chyste mystetstvo)* that provided those Ukrainian writers, who were interested in aesthetic experimentation with creative culture building incentives, thus also revealing their deep devotion to the Ukrainian national art and culture. Sriblians'kyi, for example, in a number of articles (cf. 1912a, 1912b, 1913) urged his compatriots to participate in the nation's cultural and artistic life: "Everyone who desires to live and create must [...] come out into the fresh air of action, movement, work and individual creativity in the name of *complexity, broad ambition*; [they] must struggle in *the hearth of ambiguity in the name of a mysterious, deep blue superiority*" (1912b: 361; qt. in Ilnytzkyj 1994: 12). This is exemplified also by Ukrainka's comments regarding the German influences on Kobylians'ka's life and work. In a letter to Kobylians'ka (March 20, 1899), Ukrainka acclaimed: "When you came to Ukraine with your German background, you made a willful choice, knowing where and why do you go, and now there is no fear that you will [disown you Ukrainianness]."[13] Again, in a letter sent to M. Pavlyk (June 6, 1899), Ukrainka recognized the importance of Kobylians'ka's European education for the development of her Ukrainian national identity. "Germany," she wrote, "did not destroy Kobylians'ka, but saved her by opening her mind to the wider European world. [German culture] [...], while cultivating [Kobylians'ka's] mind, also prepared her for an intelligent and conscientious service to the native land. [...]."[14] Thus, the modernist national ideology (*intelihents'kyi natsionalism*; Kas'ianov 1993, 98) materialized as "a patriotism, in which the promotion of one's own nation coincided with the promotion of universal human ideals" (cf. Van de Putte 1996, 164). Above all, the Ukrainian modernists promoted the ideal of the free, creative individual. Respectively, the cult of aesthetism became a strategy of distinction that set them apart from their predecessors and current opponents, allowing them to campaign for individualism, nationalism, and the radical modernization of their society.

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[12] "Колі в Галичині головніший грунт для радикальної роботи – селяни, то у нас, на Україні перш усього треба здобути собі інтелігенцію, *вернути нації її 'мозок'*, – *або не було так, що є над чим робити, та нема кому*, – а потим вкупі з сусідами здобути ті права, які Галичині давно вже здобуті чужими руками" (Ukrainka 1977, 22; italics mine).

From what has been said, it is clear that I conceptualize the aesthetization of Ukrainian culture as an attempt to solve a number of cultural-political and national antinomies in the Ukrainian social space. As Jusdanis has argued for Greek nationalism, the aesthetization of social practices was also the "ultimate goal [...] of the project of statism [nationalism]: the maintenance of national unity through a network of linked experiences [...] " (1991, 93). Moreover, as this scholar claims, the very concept of Greekness (and I relate this to the concept of Ukrainianness as well) "is aesthetic because it promised unification of differences [...] in this imaginary sphere" (Jusdanis 1991, 93-94). "The supposedly common response to beauty is but one experience linking the subjects to one another"

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[13] "[...] Коли ви з німецької школи прийшли на Україну, то прийшли свідомо, знаючи, куди і навіщо, отже, тепер нема страхи що Ви покинете її" (1966, 128).

[14] "не згубила, а вирятувала Кобилянську Німеччина, показала їй ширший европейський світ, навчила лексики, [...] а розвивши її розум, тим самим виховала для свідомої і розумної служби рідному краю [...]" (Ukrainka

(Jusdanis 1991, 94). Accordingly, the institution of autonomous art and literature in the eyes of Ukrainian modernists proved capable of engendering a realm of shared values, a realm where the Ukrainian nation could experience its solidarity and singularity.

3.3. Constructing the Modernist National Canon

Ukrainian modernists appeared at a time when national sentiments thrived. The work of the romantics and, above all, the mass educational practices of the populists bolstered the cultivation of national sentiments and the idea of an independent Ukrainian state was no longer an abstract and foreign concept. Ukrainka's unfinished article "*Derzhavnyi lad*" (State Order, 1898; Ukrainka 1977, 215-233) provides evidence of this. Her text clearly communicates modernist political concerns and ideals. Here the prominent writer addressed the issue of statehood, proposing that the most liberating state order was democracy because it guaranteed the exercise of one's free will as embodied in the collective political will and lawful state governance. According to her, the fundamental objective of the democratic state was to recognize and protect one's human, civil and national rights. However, Ukrainian national sentiments were not unified at that time and a national myth[15] to express the political ambitions of the emerging nation was just beginning to be conceived. In this sense, the work of Drahomanov, Kulish, and other earlier patriots in creating a national identity along the lines of Shevchenko's mythical symbolism was not so much contested but adopted and adjusted to the needs of the changing social and psychological circumstances. A case in point is Kotsiubyns'kyi's letter, sent to the City Council of Poltava (*miska dumka*) in 1903. In his discourse, the eminent Ukrainian

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1966, 129).

[15] The nationalist myth, according to Haas, represents "those ideas, values, and symbols that most citizens [or citizens to be] accept despite their being divided into competing ideological camps. The myth represents the overlap among ideologies" (1997, 43).

modernist paid tribute to Ivan Kotliarevs'kyi, and construed the writer as a cultural 'hero' and a national symbol that powerfully exemplified the patriotic attachment to the Ukrainian land, people, and *culture* (Kotsiubyns'kyi 1974, 336).

The formation of the political circle "Brotherhood Tarasivtsiv" (*Bratstvo tarasivtsiv*) in Kharkhiv in the early 1890s also exemplified the process of revising the old canon of national heroes in an attempt to establish a different hierarchy of values and endorse the formation of a common Ukrainian high culture. The act of taking membership vows on Shevchenko's grave, if we are to believe Kas'ianov's evidence, was an explicit and deliberate act of acknowledgement and acceptance of the symbolic-historical legacy represented by Shevchenko as the national poet and mythmaker (Kas'ianov 1993, 98). As Kas'ianov points out, after the disbandment of the organization, its members founded the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party, out of which in 1901-1902 branched the National Ukrainian Party. Under the leadership of Mikhnovs'kyi this party put the watchword for political independence as central of its program. Its formation thus marked the birth of Ukrainian political nationalism (Kas'ianov 1993, 102). It is interesting to note here Mikhnovs'kyi's unequivocal identification with Shevchenko as a national symbol. In his brochure *An Independent Ukraine* he wrote: "Contemporary Young Ukraine considers itself the direct heir of Shevchenko. Its traditions go back to Mazepa, Khmel'nytskyi and King Danylo, passing over the Ukrainophiles" (Mikhnovs'kyi 1900, 212-213).

More significantly, Sriblians'kyi, while arguing against the cult of Shevchenko, pointed to the fact that previous generations of intellectuals have misinterpreted the national poet's political message. On these grounds, he attempted a revision of Shevchenko's life and work in order to acknowledge the poet's incontestable status as a unifying national symbol. To him, it was important to affirm the national poet as a member of an elite Ukrainian culture. Thus, Sriblians'kyi's "adaptive preference formation" (cf. Geuss 2001, 25) was expressed in resistance to the 'appropriation' of Shevchenko's image by previous generations (i.e., both the romantics and the realists-populists). He appraised Shevchenko's uniqueness and integrity, reflected in the national poet's well-defined system of values, among which patriotism was the most vital. The Ukrainian critic defined Shevchenko as a dreamer and a prophet who was able to foresee the political future of the Ukrainian nation. Sriblians'kyi emphasized the poet's Promethean spirit and elitist position in relation to the 'mob' (*iurba*; 1910b: 204; cf. also 1909d: 420). In this manner, the modernist critic undermined the established perception of Shevchenko as the poet of 'the people' (cf. Kostomarov 1881 [1996], 220), simultaneously discarding the concept of national identity associated with it.

Worthy of note here is that Ukrainian modernists often used the contestation of Shevchenko's legacy and poetic authority as a strategy of distinction by means of which they asserted their departure from the previous literary traditions. It is not surprising that Ukrainian Futurists, led my M. Semenko, also announced their revolutionizing aesthetics by ridiculing Shevchenko's idolization, and denouncing his cult (cf. Ilnytzkyj 1997, 17-18). Semenko's criticism of the cult resonated with earlier pronouncements, including Ievshan's, Tovkachevs'kyi's and Sriblians'kyi's sarcastic comments, which attempted "to divest [the national poet] of his absolute social, national and poetic authority" (Ilnytzkyj 1997, 17). Ironically, however, this criticism also was used to challenge and undermine the authority of the modernists as the ultimate modernizers, for Semenko and others in 1914 claimed their art to be the most revolutionizing, and innovative aesthetic cry of modern Ukrainian culture (cf. Ilnytzkyj 1997, 18-27).

Inspired by Jusdanis' ideas, I view this struggle as a manifestation of Ukrainian intellectuals' desire to canonize contemporary aesthetic practices in their national culture. On the basis of Bourdieu's theory of disctinction, Jusdanis, for instance, argues that the national literary canon is a "category of distinction, useful in maintaining social and cultural exclusion" (1991, 65). According to this scholar, "The legitimation of certain modes of reading and the canonization of priviledged texts are related to the manner by which status is assigned, advantages in social selection ascribed, and social stratification preserved. By reading canonical texts individuals separate their taste from popular taste, thereby lending superior value to their own social position" (Jusdanis 1991, 65). Thus, I argue that the struggles to revise and redefine the Ukrainian literary canon, and moreover, the desire of each artistic trend to establish its version as the most essential part of the emerging national culture, show the growing power of the Ukrainian intelligentsia. This power was used to exert control over the formation of a high national culture, which as Bourdieu has stressed, required the accumulation of cultural capital, i.e., the acquisition of modes of aesthetic appreciation, manners, tastes, preferences and interpretive skills (in other words, knowledge) that gives one competence and access to the products of high culture (cf. Bourdieu 1984, 466).

In my view, the significance of Sriblians'kyi's discourse on Shevchenko is twofold. On the one hand, the text contributed to the formation of the modernist literary canon, which affirmed the prestige and status of the Ukrainian artistic intelligentsia. On the other hand, it communicated the critic's desire to engage in the making of cultural citizens of an impending sovereign state, for he urged all patriotically mindful individuals, regardless of political or class or other social interests, to recognize the need to identify and *internalize* the values encoded in Shevchenko's life and poetry. In Sriblians'kyi's view, these described actual experiences of psychologically beneficial identification (i.e., identification that led to the enhancement of Ukrainian identity and resulted in individual psychological security) with the imminent Ukrainian polity (cf. Bloom 1990, 61).

As Bloom has argued, for a successful identification to be made, it is necessary that national symbols be "*appropriate* as a mode of behavior and attitude for a particular and real experiences" (1990, 51). In the Ukrainian historical space there was hardly a more popular and 'appropriate' persona than

Shevchenko is to be invented as a national symbol in order to create a sense of national identity for all diverse social strata. Perhaps, this is why Sriblians'kyi asserted: "*Shevchenka liubyt' ne til'ky narod, ale i pany*" (Both the people and the elite love Shevchenko; 1910b: 204). Apparently, the ideologue of Ukrainian modernism realized that the poet was already a constituent of the national myth and he had no other choice but to 'manipulate' the image in favor of his (modernist) political rationale. In this sense, I agree with Ilnytzkyj, who notes that "Sriblians'kyi and Ievshan never condemned the idea of the cult itself: they objected primarily against its 'Ukrainophile' character. Sriblians'kyi proved on several occasions that he was willing to defend the cult when it unequivocally served the Ukrainian national cause" (1997, 20; see also footnote 15).

I emphasize this second aspect of Ukrainian modernist attempts to revise and redefine the literary canon and pantheon of cultural heroes because, in my view, it expressed the desire to offer a competing version of national identity. This is what I think underpinned Sriblians'kyi's relentless antipopulism, and inspired him to engage in the 'battle' for canon formation. The purpose of his semantic reappropriation of Shevchenko that rendered the poet a part of the Ukrainian intellectual elite was to propose, in opposition to the official nationalist discourse of the Russian state, and the Ukrainian populist counterdiscourse, a coalescent emblematic personality that offered a persuasive model of behavior and civilized conduct for people who soon would be subjects of an independent Ukrainian national state. For the same reason, I think he also introduced the difference between high culture (modernism) and low culture (realism, populism) in cultural-political rather than strictly aesthetic terms.

Such unconcealed appropriation and re-interpretation by modernist national ideologues of literary figures like Kulish (cf. Sriblians'kyi 1909c), Shevchenko and others surely signals that the Modernist-Realist debate in Ukraine was above all a cultural-political dispute that could be characterized as a conflict over the symbols of national identity. For example, Sriblians'kyi's aesthetic definition of the nation betrays close similarities to one of Kulish's earlier pronouncements, where the romantic writer idealized the Ukrainian nation and national identity. In one of his articles, Kulish identified the experience of Ukrainianness in Kvitka-Osnovianenko's stories' as music: "You hear as if music touches your heart and tunes it on a higher note, so that you feel free from earthly concerns, flying into a realm of pure spirituality, compelled by the words of the poet. We enter his paradise, without noticing the path or the door … and we feel that indeed heaven exists on earth."[16] Not surprisingly, the modernists adored Kulish, for as Muchin stresses, the notion of aesthetic harmony was pivotal in his nationalist ideology (Muchin 1987, 54).

The process of constructing the modernist literary canon in Ukraine had broader social-political goals. As Jusdanis has suggested about the Greek nationalist project, the formation of the national literary canon ensures not simply "the preservation of prestige and allocation of cultural resources" but above all the valorization of Modernism as a national ideology to "indoctrinate the nation into its values," clearly engaging the production of patriots (1991, 66). From this perspective, it is not surprising that in *fin-de-siècle* Ukraine the notion of 'people' (*narod*) together with the concept of culture became the most contested categories. Both the modernists and the realists-populists faced a contradiction that neither of the opposing positions could resolve. This was the issue of 'rootedness:' what constituted the core of Ukrainian national identity and what narratives best represented it. The modernists discovered the 'roots' in the national high culture. The populists argued the value of 're-invented' mass (folk) culture, asserting its closeness to thriving Ukrainian vernacular practices.

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[16] "чуеш душею, наче якась музика пройшла тобі через душу і настроїла її на вищий, на якийсь лад, – що знявся би од землі і полинував би голубиними крилами одпочивати од земних мук там, де чисті душі, […] владичих речей поета, зайшли ми в його рай, не спостерігши, якою стежкою, якими дверима, – і здалось нам, що справді рай на землі буває […]" (qt. in Muchin 1987, 58).

3.4. Modernizing the Tradition:

The Elitist Model of Ukrainian National Identity

The specific historical conditions in *fin-de-siècle* Ukraine stimulated the modernist social imagination to produce a concept of national culture and national identity that emphasized the individual experience of the nation. Unlike the Bulgarians, the Ukrainian modernists operated without the protection and legitimating power of a Ukrainian nation-state thereby facing a difficult predicament: to negotiate a version of national identity that would successfully combine the political and the cultural principle, thus securing the originality and cohesiveness of their nation. Their solution was to formulate Ukrainianness as a moral and spiritual principle embodied in the high national culture they labored to create. As a result, modernist ideologues articulated a notion of culture that was explicitly aesthetic and tightly associated with the establishment of a sovereign Ukrainian state. In Ievshan's words, this "aesthetic culture" was the space where the individual and collective creative potentials are realized, inspired by ideals and values that reveal "the constant strive of humanity towards absolute goodness, purity, and freedom" (1910, 5; qt. in Muchin 1987, 334). Naturally, modernist critics began conceptualizing literature, and respectively culture, as a social institution that commended the need for stable identification with the nation as a universal human value. As Sriblians'kyi wrote: "Nationality we consider as a form that effortlessly and in the most beautiful manner represents the content of life. Nationality expresses our ideals and dreams, and therefore, it must have for us the all-encompassing and most universal character. […] Nationality is one of the forms of human compliance to life." [17]

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[17] "Національність приймаємо як форму, в якій найкраще, найлегше улюблено можемо виявляти зміст життя, наші ідеали, мрії, і тому вона для нас повинна мати самий широкий, універсальний характер" (Sriblians'kyi 1910c: 734).

One detects a similar intent in his pronouncement that Ukrainian literature's goal is to resolve the Ukrainian national problem by assisting "the Ukrainian people's cultural emancipation from their tragic colonial dependency and slavishness" (Sriblians'kyi 1912b: 104). The precondition for completing this goal was the liberation of the individual, for only "a free person could create culture and be [...] a patriot, true patriot" (Sriblians'kyi 1912b: 104). Essentially, what Sriblians'kyi meant by 'a free individual' was a person, unrestricted in the expression of her will, liberated from all kinds of oppression and social constraints, a strong and unique personality that creates and controls the dynamics of societal and cultural progress. In short, Sriblians'kyi espouses the philosophy of individualism and the universal human values of freedom and personal autonomy associated with it.

The question of identity crisis as well as the psychological consequences of the transformation of an individual into a citizen of a newly developing nation then became the subject of many modernist artistic and theoretical musings. In my view, Vynnychenko's writings present particularly powerful illustrations of the new concept of the individual as a member of a collectivity that essentially was constituted through the union of free individuals who associate in the name of the national good.[18] In this sense, the major thematic focus of Vynychenko's *oeuvre* was the individual's struggle to overcome the passivity and dullness of 'mob' psychology, which enforced total dependency on, and assimilation of the individual will into the willpower of the 'crowd.' As Ukrainka put it, Vynnychenko was most concerned with one's struggle to overcome "the spirit of slavishness that forces one to 'blend' with the mass, a gripping force that erodes individuality, making everyone the same, subjecting the individual to animalistic impulses and instincts,"[19] leading to one's complete deindividualization and depersonalization. As Ukrainka furthermore contended, Ukrainian modernism, in particular Vynnychenko's writings, explored the *psyche* of the mob by recognizing that "the mass individual" was neither a "theatrical accessory as the romantics saw her" (*butafors'ka prynadlezhnist', iak tse bulo u starykh romantykiv*) nor was she "a mannequin to try clothes sewn from societal documents as the naturalists saw her" (*maneken dlia prymiruiuvannia kostiumiv, poshytykh z liuds'kykh dokumentiv, iak tse bulo v narutalistiv*), but a person " in the widest sense of the word, not separated from the crowd […] but on the contrary […] immersed into her [social] environment and at once standing out sharply so that society ceases to be one body but dissolves into equally valuable, albeit differently constituted personalities."[20]

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[18] Cf. also Ukrainka's interpretation of Vynnychenko's works (1966, 192).

[19] "рабський дух, що примушує людину самохіть залічувати себе до натовпу як чогось стихійного, що поглинає, нівелює, стирає індівідуальності,

I read Ukrainka's own dramas in a similar vein. In particular, I see her *Kaminnyi hospodar* (1912) whose main idea – according to the author's own confession – was to express the "triumph of the deadening, conservative principle embodied by the Captain over the divided, prideful, and egotistical lady Anna, and through her, the triumph over Don Juan, 'the knight of liberty'."[21] In other words, at the center of most modernist literature was the individual's struggle to preserve, develop and express her own unique personality in resistance to the pressures of the 'mob.' As Ukrainka acknowledged, the new Ukrainian literature approached this problem with an understanding that "each personal tragedy is unique, rooted not in the tragedy of others, but related to these […] through the power of common intellectualizations."[22]

приносить її в жертву інстінктові, стадності" (Ukrainka 1966, 141).

[20] "[…] не виведено з натовпу, […] а навпаки, […] залишено своєму середовищі і разом з тим висунуто на перший план так близько, що й середовище вже перестало здаватися тлом, розчленувавшись на рівноцінні, проте неравнозначні постаті " (Ukrainka 1966, 139).

[21] "перемога камінного, консервативного принципу, втіленого в Командорі, над роздвоєнною душею гордої, егоїстичної жінки донни Анни, а через неї і над Дон-Жуаном, 'лицарем волі' " (Ukrainka 1966, 162).

[22] "у кожної особи своя драма, не підкорена іншим, а тільки пов'язана з

The different understanding of the modernists concerning the nature of nation occasioned their specific style of imagining the Ukrainian nation. Their conceptualization, as suggested earlier, was essentially ambivalent, operating with both ethnic and civic criteria to maintain and express claims for cultural distinctiveness. Greenfeld has stressed the problematic nature of this type of nationalism, which is "plagued by internal contradictions" and combines both ethnic and civic criteria of nationality, defining it as "particularistic civic nationalism" (1996a: 104; 107). She writes,

> the freedom of the individual in this type of nationalism is denied consistently, or, rather, it is redefined as inner freedom or as recognized necessity, and this denial and redefinition are predicated on the rejection of the individual as a rational being and an autonomous actor. Individuality itself is equated with the 'true' human nature, which expresses itself in self-abnegation and submersion (dissolution) in the collectivity (Greenfeld 1996a: 104-105).

In this respect, Sriblians'kyi's interpretation of individualism (1912b) and Ievshan's concept of 'aesthetic culture' (1910) were articulated with the intention of asserting a sense of self that was ambiguously defined as free from social constraints but bound by patriotic obligation to "express that complex of sensations, beliefs, struggles and optimism that constitutes the ideology of the Ukrainian creative intelligentsia."[23] Aiming at constructing a civil society, the modernists tried to inculcate a new, 'elitist' model of national identity, and relentlessly worked to create a civic public 'polity' with the intelligentsia as the national-political leader. This position was predicated on the belief that the intelligentsia was the most educated and cultured part of Ukrainian society and therefore, was able to understand and appreciate other cultures as well as to adequately communicate Ukrainian national interests. The political expression of this position one finds in Mikhnovs'kyi (1900), who stated:

іншим, […] знову ж таки в силу спільних умов" (Ukrainka 1966, 138).

[23] "висловити той комлекс почувань, віри, бадьорости, боротьби, який складає суть ідейного, творчого українства" (Sriblians'kyi 1910c: 735).

> […] The aspirations of a society are the aspirations of the intelligentsia. The spontaneous movements of the intelligentsia are the spontaneous movements and sympathies of the entire society.
>
> […] The era of embroidered shirts, peasant overcoats, and whisky [i.e., often interpreted as the culture of the *Narod*] has passed, never to return again. ***The stand taken by the Ukrainian intelligentsia of the third formation points towards a bloody and relentless struggle for its people.*** The intelligentsia believes in its own personal strength and in the national will to fulfill its obligation (Mikhnovs'kyi 1900, 211; 213; italics mine).

By the same token, it is interesting to note Ukrainka's response to the accusations that she had neglected "peasant themes" and had devoted her writing to "literariness" (*literaturshchyna*) and intellectualism. In a letter to her uncle, Drahomanov, she wrote: "certainly, the problem is that I interpret the words nationality, literature, and intelligentsia in a different manner."[24] In her view, the nation was "a community of free individuals" (*spil'ka samostiinykh osob*) integrated through a system of common existential interests and ideals (Ukrianka 1966, 192). Thus, she maintained that the freedom to express one's distinctive inner self as an autonomous individual, and the personal willful contribution to the collective wellbeing determined the membership in the national society (Ukrainka 1966, 138; 141).

Statements like Ukrainka's – asserting one's freedom to chose and willfully change her nationality because the individual strongly valued her cultural belongingness and a sense of shared Ukrainian identity (cf. also Kapustians'kyi 1910) – make me think that the literary production of the Ukrainian modernists was, in Ukrainian modern intellectual history, one of the first attempts of a particular group to establish control, and regulate the national image for both insiders and outsiders alike. However, it is important to reiterate that in Ukraine the modernists did not have a dominant position in the literary field. They had to struggle to affirm themselves as individuals, rich with symbolical capital. The possession of such capital, in their view, guaranteed them the status of cultural leaders. In additon, by means of defending the hegemony of art over political and social concerns, they sought to affirm also their status of national leaders. As they saw it, the new ideology of 'art for art's sake' allowed them to "exercise power while denying participation, belief, and investment" (cf. Jusdanis 1991, 93).

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[24] "[…] але тут, певне, вся біда в тому, що я інакше розумію слова: народність, літературність та інтелігенція" (Ukrainka 1966, 121).

Taking into account the politics of cultural identity that motivated, for example, Ukrainka's statements, two important points can be made regarding the modernist position on the national problem. First, it is clear that the 'state' as a political goal and a mobilizing metaphor started to a play more significant role than 'the people'. In this sense, the formation of an independent Ukrainian state surfaced as a key political claim because the nation-state was now envisioned as the only social-political order wherein Ukrainian culture could survive and flourish. Second, the identification of 'the people' was now made on the basis of their perceived relationship to the Ukrainian high culture that would aid the formation of the independent state, i.e., as citizens – political subjects that were rendered 'governable' by their self-motivation, free will, and consciousness. Perhaps, this is what inspired Sriblians'kyi to declare that, "Nationalism is considered most necessary for the masses. The elites do not need it. From this perspective, the *demos* is the object of nationalism. Nationalism [...] must be only democratic [...]. Ukrainianness as ethics is the never-ending force of protest [...], because Ukrainianness is the idea of relentless struggle with iniquity in the name of the free, creative individual."[25]

In this way, 'the people' as a collectivist notion became associated with the "mass unconscious" that held vital, albeit primitive and irrational, psychological forces (cf. Tratner 1996). Even a superficial consideration of the fictional conflicts explored in modernist prose, will show Ukrainian writers' preoccupation with individual rebelliousness, and desire to escape the constraints of their backward and oppressive society. The conflict often takes the form of an internal dilemma, which the fictional characters have to resolve. Particularly powerful examples are Kobylians'ka's Tetiana and Mavra, who daringly face their fate, resisting a philistine provincial society, yet bounded to its culture and mentality by indestructible ties (*V nediliu rano zillia kopala* 1908; cf. Tarnawsky 2001). In this manner, I also read Kotsiubyns'kyi's female character Paraskitsia ("*Vid'ma*" [Witch], 1898), whose immense suffering as a result of the intimidation and collective coercion of her fellow villagers reveals the tragedy of the individual trying to fit collective expectations and imposed social roles. Both narratives, in this sense, attempt an exploration of the 'collective unconscious,' recruiting superstitions and images of outcasts (e.g., witches and gypsies) that are deeply embedded in the 'folk' consciouness and trying to outline the societal impact on the formation of an individual's personality by redefining the relationship between the individual and society.

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[25] "Націоналізм найбільш потрібний для найнизших шарів людности, а не для висших. І тому – точку приложення націоналізму – *демос*. Націоналізм [...] повинен бути тільки *демократичним* [...]. Українство, як етика – це вічно протестуюча сила [...] бо наше українство – ідея вічного протесту против зла, во імя вільної творчої людини" (Sriblians'kyi 1910c: 736).

Kotsiubyns'kyi's and Kobylians'ka's texts are also interesting because they reveal the mechanism of the modernist use of elements borrowed from Ukrainian folk culture. Their fiction shows that, despite the fervent denouncement of the vernacular tradition as an identity securing system in many critical and theoretical discourses on Ukrainian modernism, the practice of exploiting folk items was popular among Ukrainian artists. In fact, a number of early modernist writers and poets examined traditional items and the thriving Ukrainian oral tradition in order to find symbols, images and expressive 'native' artistic forms that were particularly suitable to produce the emotional effects pursued by the artist. In addition to Kobylians'ka and Kotsiubyns'kyi, the modernists who were interested in experimenting with folkloric material also included Ukrainka, Stefanyk, Tychyna, Kobryns'ka and others. This observation is significant because it points to a paradox specific to the Ukrainian modernist movement, a paradox that has been regarded as one of the Ukrainian modernism's 'deviations.' This paradox is manifested in the discrepancy between actual artistic practices with respect to the revival and appreciation of vernacular culture, and its zealous denigration in the critical and theoretical definitions of Ukrainian modernism as an aesthetic ideology. Contrast, for example, Kobylians'ka's, Kobryns'ka's and others' interests in experimenting with folkloric images in their modernist writings with Sriblians'kyi's, Ievshan's, and other modernist critics' objection to the consecration of Ukrainian folk culture as an identity securing system.

Some ideologues of Ukrainian modernism particularly disliked the populist re-invention and commodification of tradition-based expressions that had been borrowed from the extant everyday life practices of Ukrainian peasants. This type of folklore they identified as a "trade in folk-art goods" and harshly reacted to its popularization (Sriblians'kyi 1912a: 354). Still, some of Sriblians'kyi's pronouncements sound confusing, especially when the critic fails to draw a clear line between the commodified (revived) folk material and the actual tradition-based expressions. For example, in his article "*Z hromads'koho zhyttia*," Sriblians'kyi declared that "the culture of the simple folk [Ukrainian peasantry] is useless" for the "intelligentsia" (1913: 564). However, his intentions are transparent when he talks about the 'popular culture' produced by the realists-populists, noting that they "use the simplest popular element as a foundation of the national culture," thus creating a 'mass' culture ("culture for the *common people*") instead of "a culture for the nation" (Sriblians'kyi 1912a: 354).

As I have tried to show so far, one of the principal and most passionately defended points by the ideologues of Ukrainian modernism was the renunciation of the demotic model of Ukrainian identity. Critics like Sriblians'kyi and Ievshan refused to acknowledge the primacy of 'invented' peasant (folk) tradition as an epitome of modern Ukrainianness. However, as the narratives of Kobylians'ka, Kostiubyns'ky and other authors demonstrate, modernist artists sought inspiration from extisting vernacular traditions and delved, perhaps deliberately, into the collective memory in search of suitable native aesthetic forms. This type of expirementation was particularly characteristic of the Ukrainian symbolists who, much in accord with their Bulgarian counterparts, attempted the rediscovery and expression of the national 'soul' through the transformation of tradition-based items into abstract symbols that simultaneously conveyed universal values and ideas, yet preserved the native flavor of the original oral form. In this regard, the most important change that the modernists introduced with respect to the aesthetic treatment of traditional texts was their 'individualization' and re-contexualization in a more abstract philosophical, aesthetic, and thematic background. More specifically, the use of traditional elements, as for example Kobylians'ka's experimentation illustrates, could be viewed as ideological means of re-fashioning readers' consciousness in an attempt to propagate and enhance a national identity based on a system of modernist values and virtues. This was achieved by looking at tradition-based items with an aesthetic gaze that compelled the reader to notice the mode of artistic representation, involving her in a 'game' of form and style that accentuated the mastery over the old form (cf. Bourdieu 1984, 183). Essentially then, the reader becomes entangled in a continuum of shared aesthetic experiences intended to engeder a sense of pleasure and pride.[26]

Although it was not a prevalent mode of aesthetic innovation, utilizing folkloric elements in Ukrainian modernist literature can be viewed as a vital part of the processes of nation building and the creation of collective identity. It essentially shows that one of the many ways to represent the modern mind and attitudes is by exploring and aligning the centuries old ethnic traditions with the present conditions. This transpired in both Bulgaria and Ukraine. By subjecting folkloric elements to the modernist code and exposing them to a cynical[27] idiosyncratic reinvention, the modernists in both localities pursued the creation of a specific national 'style' that would distinguish their modernist production from the Western prototypes and would help them create art forms that clearly manifested their ethnic and cultural distinctiveness.

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[26] Particularly powerful examples of the modernist use of items borrowed from the oral tradition one can find in Ol'ha Kobylians'ka's (*V nediliu rano…*, "*Pryroda*"), Mykhailo Kostiubyns'ky's (*Intermezzo*; *Tini zabutykh predkiv*), and Ukrainka's works (*Lisova pisnia*). The practice is also well represented in Kobryns'ka's modernist prose, created between 1893 and 1899. Most of her experimental pieces were included in a collection of stories, entitled *Kazky* and published in Chernivsti in 1904.

As Fisher points out, "the constitution of communities requires the existence of certain modes of communication." He further elaborates by saying that "communities are co-constituted through communication transactions in which participants coauthor a story that has coherence and fidelity for the life that one would lead [...] " (1997, 307; 320). Modernist writers re-borrowed folkloric items because they wanted to encourage their readers to recognize such elements as part of their national cultural heritage. In this manner, modernist authors created order and meaning (making the tradition relevant to an elite and highly educated audience) by mediating between the self and the world, providing the self with a sort of "transsubjective truth value[s]" (Hintchman and Hintchman 1997, xvi; xxiii). As a result, the experimentation of modernist narratives with traditional folk items attempted to locate individuals within the legitimate and continued existence of the group, thereby offering to the Ukrainian readership a powerful means to generate a sense of common identity, yet having also the potential of being "critical, emancipatory instrument[s]" (cf. Hinchman and Hinchman 1997, xviii.). For this reason, I think that the modernist practice of using traditional folk items assisted the re-invention and modernization of pre-existing traditions, at once producing a specific type of printed literature that opened a space where the community of modernist readers was formed, and at the same time liberated from its ties to 'peasant roots.' In this sense, the modernist re-borrowing and use of folk items helped their efforts to 'appropriate' the tradition and re-invent it as a part of the Ukrainian high national culture. Essentially, this space was also the realm where coherence of the nation was reinforced. More importantly, however, it was a space where Ukrainian artists successfully realigned their cultural heritage with Europe, asserting their right to control the revival – and ultimately, modernization – of their inherited traditions. They not only made such traditions meaningful in the context of modernity, but most of all successfully resisted the influences coming from Europe, resorting to local resources in sustaining the singularity and originality of their national culture. The paradox then appears to be not at all paradoxical. What in fact theorists of Ukrainian modernism denied was the appropropriation of the Ukrainian cultural heritage by the populist-realists who approached folkloric items as 'facts' that represented the life and history of the Ukrainian nation, rather than signs or even symbols, the meaning of which was the subject of constant negotiation, manipulation, change, and reinsitutionalization.

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[27] It is important to note here that I employ the concept of cynicism without implying pejorative connotations. Instead, I adopt Peter Sloterdjik's definition, which recognizes modern cynicism as a "state of consciousness that follows after naïve ideologies and their enlightenment" (1992, 3; 5).

On the other hand, an attempt to legitimize and encourage modernist experimentation with items from Ukrainian folk culture is evident in modernist critical discourses, institutionalizing the notion of 'people' as a container of national creative energy. For example, Sriblians'kyi in his article "*Na velykim shliakhu*" wrote:

> The People (*narod*) contains in itself plentiful unique features, deeply buried in the soul treasures of ideas and beauty which, if touched by a skillful artistic hand would play the strings of its spiritual lyre and produce a new tune such as the world has not known yet. It is no wonder that the Ukrainian spirit is expressed in this luring magnificence and will flare with unprecedented power of thought because it is a vast organism, harmonious in its brilliance, characterized by the richness of intrinsic processes of movement and a multitude of subtle and thrilling nuances of feelings. When this intact, inherent potential artistry becomes alive and gives birth to splendid, unexpected blossoms of creativity, there is hope that beauty and expressive power will flourish, a unique beauty, and artistic drive, which exist nowhere in the world yet. The *raison d'être* for the search of the new sphere of existence that we call the Ukrainian

> people lies in this uniqueness. This is the new sphere and the new culture that forms a new layer over the rest of previous modes of existence.[28]

Eva Mackey, a contemporary scholar, has argued that the processes "of creating identity at a national level typically involve 'cultural politics,' whereby attempts are made to institutionalize a particular ideological notion of 'people' in order to create new types of citizens and subjects, and new categories of 'insiders and outsiders'" (1997, 137). It is apparent from the examples cited above that, given the ambivalent evaluation of Ukrainian society as 'backward' and 'uncultured' and the prevalent embarrassment of being 'at the margins" of Europe' (Sriblians'kyi, 1909d: 422), the modernist image of 'the people' was highly ambivalent and biased. This tension was expressed by the recurrent classificatory categories in Ukrainian modernist criticism *natsia* (nation), *narod* (the 'people') and *iurba* (the mob).[29] These terms were used to express the modernist intellectuals' antipopulism when affirming their pretensions for cultural leadership. In addition, the boundary between *narod* and *iurba* operated as a strategy for mobilization and agitation by means of which the modernists encouraged the acceptance of their own model of Europeanization.

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[28] "Народ має в собі остільки своєрідних особливостів, захованих в глибині душі скарбів думки і краси, що коли умілою і мистецькою рукою торкнути його духовної ліри, то зазвучить вона по-новому, так, як, *ще ні один инший елемент всесвіту не звучав.* Не диво, що український дух виявляється в принадному світлі, виблискує незнаним ще сяйвом думки, – бо це великий, складний в своїй грандіозності організм, з безліччю внутрішніх процесів руху, з безліччю тонких і чарівних нюансів настрою. І коли вся ця внутрішня, потенціяльна художність оживає, то з'являються надія на багатий розцвіт краси і сили. Своєрідної краси і сили, ніде ще на світі не виявленої. В оцій своєрідності і лежить той величезний *raison d'être* шукання в новій сфері буття, що звемо Український народ. Так, це нова сфера, а тому і нова культура, що кладеться новим шаром на всі попередні пласти життя" (1910a, 52; author's italics).

[29] According to Ilnytzkyj, "[…] only during the modernist period […] the systematic expression of dissatisfaction with things Ukrainian" is clearly manifested. "The populist image of the 'noble' people now metamorphoses into the ignoble 'mob', from which the intelligentsia must defend the achievements of culture" (1991: 262).

While engaging in the creation of modern individuals (highly sophisticated and cultured European citizens, or "spiritual artistocrats" as Sriblians'kyi has put it), Ukrainian modernists thus played a role in the 'subject-ification of the people' (i.e., in the making of cultural citizens; cf. Ong 1996, 738). In particular, Kotsiubyns'kyi's confession that Ukrainian modernists "did not intend to abandon the representation of the peasant life"[30] is typical of the attitudes of Ukrainian intellectuals, who were born and raised in the context of a thriving Ukrainian vernacular culture. As the eminent Ukrainian modernist writer acknowledged, "[...] to limit the resources for our program is not our goal, [...] [rather] we want to expand and make them deeper [...], we endeavor to [make aware our intelligentsia] of other literary forces that represent the interests of other social groups such as the intelligentsia, the working class, and the artistic community."[31] On the other hand, Sriblians'kyi and other modernist ideologues contested the popularization of folk culture in its realist-populist reinvention, refusing to recognize such 'ethnographic representations' as the placeholder of Ukrainian national identity because, as Sribilians'kyi put it, the modernists felt obliged to establish their version of Ukrainianness on such principles so that it "attracts with its incomparable beauty and power" (*vono malo prynadnu krasy, sylu*; 1910c: 733).

Further evidence of the cynical attitude of modernists toward the symbolization of the vernacular culture is the rhetoric employed by Sriblians'kyi to promote the modernist national ideal and high culture. Interestingly enough, he relies on conventionalized 'folkloric' metaphors such as the 'magic folk tale'

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[30] Letter to Panas Myrnyi, requesting his assistance in the launching of a new literary almanac, entitled *Z potoku zhyttia*; Kotsiubyns'kyi 1974, 292-93.

[31] "не мали на меті взагалі зректися творів з життя селянского [...] обмежувати джерела творчости зовсім не наша програма [...] ми хочемо розширити та поглибити їх [...]. Задумавши видати такий збріник [...] ми тільки хотіли зробити спробу, хотіли звернути увагу наших літературних сил на инши верстви суспільности, на інтелігенцію, фабричних робітників, світ артистичний " (Kotsiubyns'kyi 1974, 292-293).

(*kazka*).[32] He, for example, defines the mission of the modernist art as "*provodyria po dorozi v kazku*" (leading onto the road to wonderland). In my opinion, this metaphor is used in order to assert the specific and unique character of the modernist perspective on the national question, and convey the central idea of their modernizing political ideology: "***We must be always in motion, walking on the road to wonderland, [trying to complete] the wondrous tale of our life: [the creation of] universal Ukrainianness in Ukraine.***"[33] In fact, Sriblians'kyi's rhetoric, the devices and strategies of distinction he employs, including the appropriation of conventionalized 'folk' terms, reveal his selective re-invention and re-contextualization of the 'folk' code. He utilizes it with the intention to strengthen and deepen the emotional effect of his idealized aesthetic notion of Ukrainianness, simultaneously assuming a 'disinterested,' modernizing and nationalizing position.

As Ilnytzkyj has pointed out, the truly innovative aspect of Ukrainian modernist ideology was that "[it] severed art from its edifying and enlightening function." "It," writes Ilnytzkyj, "also liberated literature in a programmatic sort of way from its fixation on the visibly salient attributes of the Ukrainian identity," the peasant and ethnographic themes of populist-realist 'mass' literature. His revision of the texts published by Ukrainian modernists on the pages of the journal *Ukrains'ka khata* shows that the dissociation from the peasant masses was extremely aggressive, and clearly announced as a principle of "spiritual aristocratism." In Sriblians'kyi's view, the priniciple of spiritual aristocratism was the "precondition for culture." As Ilnytzkyj demonstrates, the writers of *Ukrains'ka khata* "strongly opposed the idea of Ukrainian culture as some sort of petty provincialism engaged to open a space so that urbane and civilized pursuits could take their place." They espoused a view that Ukrainian popular culture, was "unfit for the intelligentsia," and saw a resolution in the creation of a sophisticated, high culture (1994: 12). In short, "the ideologues of the journal were clearly spelling out a program that would take Ukrainian culture both outward and inward, i.e., make it simultaneously an expression of the universal and the national. It had become a medium that granted individuals 'the necessary fullness and satisfaction of [their] personal existence' while allowing them to remain true to their nation" (1994: 14).

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[32] Worth noting is that Kobryns'ka, for instance, harbored deep love for the 'oral tales' of her native village. In her modernist works, she often 'played' with traditional prose genre forms such as the tale and the legend in an attempt to find the most suitable, authentic Ukrainian forms to convey her emancipatory and feminist ideas (cf. her stories *Sudyl'nytsi, Chudovyshche*, and other; Kobryns'ka 1958). In this respect, cf. also Ilnytzkyj's comments (1994: 20, note 70).

[33] "Все уркаїнофільство, минуле і сучасне [...] не мало й не має виразного обличчя, не має своеї ідеї [...] І тому ми мусимо врешті поставити своє українство на такий грунт, де б воно мало принадну краси, силу [...] *Ми мусимо завжди бути в процесі руху до дорозі в казку*, йдучи до *казки нашого життя — універсального українства на Україні*" (1910c: 733; italics mine).

3.5. Modernist "Political Acculturation" and the Nation's Europeanization

The modernist reasoning about Europe betrays similarities to Ferguson's notion of "political acculturation" (1996, 174-177) because it was used to explore inconsistencies in, and alternatives to, the extant models of Ukrainian national culture. Moreover, it was a type of nationalizing cultural policy that was implemented from a particular cultural-political position (what would be beneficial for the creation of a Ukrainian high culture) and thus, was used to disrupt the existing traditions and redefine the social order by *a purposeful and careful* introduction of European aesthetic ideas, values of conduct and tastes. In fact, as I argue, the modernist insistence on the Europeanization of Ukrainian culture, a process that in their view equaled the creation of a high national culture, represents an interesting attempt to change not simply the aesthetic dispositions of their readership, but more importantly, to enforce a different national *habitus*.

I recall Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* here, especially as he defined it in relation to taste and aesthetic dispositions, hoping that it will help me grasp the operative principles of Ukrainian modernist ethos and nationalizing politics. Citing Kant, Bourdieu defines taste as "an acquired disposition to 'differentiate' and 'appreciate', [...] in other words, [a disposition] to establish and mark differences by a process of distinction which is not (or not necessarily) a distinct knowledge, in Leibniz's sense, since it ensures recognition (in the ordinary sense) of the object without implying knowledge of the distinctive features which define it"(Bourdieu 1984, 446). Arguing that the primary forms of classification through which the *habitus* operates are effective because of their impact on the unconscious and non-linguistic modes of knowing that lie "beyond the reach of introspective scrutiny or control by the will," Bourdieu points to the fact that such schemes "engage the most fundamental principles of construction and evaluation of the social world" serving to provide one with " 'a sense of one's place,' guiding the occupants of a given place in social space towards the social positions adjusted to their properties, and towards the practices of goods which befit the occupants of that position" (1984, 446).

The modernist aesthetics that aimed at upsetting the ordinary way of thinking about the world by stimulating the release and expression of a flow of impressions and sensations inaccessible to the consciousness were, therefore, particularly fit for shaping independent individuals, or social agents who, "far from reacting mechanically to mechanical situations, respond to the invitations of threats of a world whose meaning they have helped to produce" (Bourdieu 1984, 467). In this context, the elitist social order was defined in terms of a network of clear-cut oppositions

> between high (sublime, elevated, pure) and low (vulgar, low, modest), spiritual and material, fine (refined, elegant) and coarse (heavy, fat, crude, brutal), light (subtle, lively, sharp, adroit) and heavy (slow, thick, blunt, laborious, clumsy), free and forced, [...] between unique (rare, different, distinguished, exclusive, exceptional, singular, novel) and common (ordinary, banal, commonplace, trivial, routine), brilliant (intelligent) and dull (obscure, grey, mediocre; Bourdieu 1984, 467).

This network of oppositions ascribed particular roles to the 'elite' (Ukrainian nationalist intelligentsia) and the 'mass' of the dominated (the peasants, the mob). The point to emphasize is that the employment and systematic reification of such oppositions facilitates the inscription of (particularly suggestive) hierarchies and classifications into the people's minds, including classifications that support ethnic and national identification (Bourdieu 1984, 468; 470-471). Because the goal of Ukrainian modernists was to seek international recognition for the Ukrainian nation, the solution for them was to align to European standards, not only aesthetic, but also social, political, economic and quality of life. The re-invented traditional folk culture propagated by the realists-populists, on the one hand, and modern Europe, on the other, constituted for them two poles of anxiety of influence (cf. Jusdanis 1991, 27). The modernists in Ukraine strove to gain respect both locally and globally, which forced them to declare a position that somehow was able to transcend local boundaries without loosing the flavor of ethnic distinctiveness. They had to connect Ukrainian national culture to the larger political-economic world; and Europe embodied for them this 'world system.' In other words, they found themselves crucified between 'the modern' and the 'traditional,' seeking a distance from the latter in order to affirm the former. It is hardly surprising then that Ukrainian modernists put an emphasis on the construction of a high Ukrainian culture and its acceptance as the only legitimate institution of signification representing the essence of Ukrainian cultural distinctiveness.

Ferguson's notion of political acculturation, to a degree, also helps us understand why the modernists in Ukraine posed such a fundamental challenge to the cultural norms they inherited. Their discourse was essentially one of social engineering. A key aspect of modernist cultural politics was the worshiping of the artist as an accomplished individual, whose refined taste and aesthetic sense was "an expression of a priviledged position in social space whose distinctive value [was] objectively established in its relationship to expressions generated from different conditions" (Bourdieu 1984, 56). This priviledged position was also clearly associated with the free and creative expression of one's Ukrainianness, deemed as a supreme act of self-fulfillment. Therefore, the cultivation of a taste for West European modernist literature and art, and in that order – understanding and appreciation of Ukrainian modernist art and literature – was used as a means to unite and separate. As Bourdieu explains, aesthetic taste "distinguishes in an essential way, since taste is the basis of all that one has – people and things – and all that one is for others, whereby one classifies oneself and is classified by others." It, as manifested preferences, affirms in a practical manner "inevitable differences" (Bourdieu 1984, 56). As he explains,

> […] every struggle over art […] is [also a struggle for] the imposition of an art of living, that is, the transmutation of an arbitrary way of living into the legitimate way of life which casts every other way of living into the artbitrariness. The artists's life-style is always a challenge thrown at [the common life-style], which it seeks to condemn as unreal and even absurd, by sort of practical demonstration of the emptiness of the values and powers it pursues (Bourdieu 1984, 57).

Revealing, in this respect, are the confessions of O. Biletskyi, P. Karmans'kyi and others. Let me here illustrate this point with Biletskyi's finely tuned observations:

> An urban intelligentsia emerged, a young Ukrainian bourgeoisie stirred to life, a Ukrainian literary-artistic bohemia appeared. [Suddenly] there was a need for madrigals, triolets, impromptu verses and other forms of salon poetry, unheard of earlier in Ukrainian literature. Almanacs appeared with sketches that emulated seminude maidens who inhaled the aroma of unusual lilies or extended their hands to the sun, which was either rising or setting in a mysterious distance. In city living rooms, hanging on the wall right next to Shevchenko's portrait decorated in embroidered ritual cloths, were reproductions of [Arnold] Bŏklin's "Island of the Dead" or Franz [von] Stuck's "Sin;" poets – with elaborate ties, carelessly knotted (in place of a ribbon), sporting wide-brimmed fedoras instead of gray hats – began reciting and singing their poems. Their verses reverberated with new motifs, new private experiences, a yearning for an unknown divinity in which they "believed while not believing;" motifs of the city as a million-headed beast, which they both loved and hated, cursed and blessed; motifs of Baeudelaireian spleen, Ukrainian ennui, which was unknown previously by poets in this sense.[34]

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[34] "Виникла миська інтелігенція, проникнулася молода українська буржуазія, з'явилася українсько–літературно–артистична богема. З'явилася

The modernist position then signaled the occurrence of important changes in the lifestyle of Ukrainians, firstly, because it tried to redefine – from an elitist and individualistic perspective – all key mobilizing metaphors (e.g., individual, family, people, culture, society, etc.). This is exemplified by Sriblians'kyi's evaluation of Kotsiubyns'kyi's novella *Fata Morgana*, where the modernist critic acknowledged that,

> […] the novella *Fata morgana* […] demonstrates that the writer has approached with a subjective and impressionistic method even the most realistic representations […] The entire work […] defeats populist ideals with their own weapons […] the peasant social ethics and the physiological terror of undeveloped beings create such a depressing and repulsive picture of inner tragedy […] that contemporary populists need to find a new [more viable] foundation to legitimate their ideology. […] [Kotsiubyns'kyi's work] firmly *draws the conclusion that the collective ideal is destroyed* […] *and that the strong independent individual is the only hope.*[35]

потреба в мадригалах, тріолетах, експромтах і в інших видозмінах салонової поезії, за яку раніше в українськи літературе не чули. З'явилися альманахи з везирунками, що вдавали напівголих дів, які або вдихають аромат дивовижних лілей, або простягяють руки до сонця, що сходило, чи десь знікало у невідомій далині. У міських вітальнях, де озодоблений гаптованими рушниками висів на стінці портрет Шевченка у безпосередньому сусідстві з репродукціями "Острова Мертвих" Бекліна чи "Гріха" Франца Штука, стали деклямувати й мелодеклямувати свої вірші поети с пишними галстухами – замість стрічки, які вони зав'язували недбало, а на вулиці замість традиційної сивої шапки – носіли фертові широкополі капелюхи. У їхніх віршах звучали нові мотиви, нові індівідуальні переживання, поривання до невідомого божества, в яке вони "вирили" – "не віруючи," мотиви міста стотисячоголового звіря, що його разом любили й ненавиділи, проклиналий благословляли, мотиви Бодлерівского спліну, української нудьги, – що в цьому значенні була невідома ранішим поетам" (qt. in Muchin 1987, 262).

[35] "[…] твір Fata morgana […] показує, що письменник у малюванні навіть об'єктивни малюнків перейшов до імпресіонізму, до суб'єктивного їх осветлення […] Цей твір […] побиває зуздром ідеалли народництва […] соціяльна етика села, вкупі з фізіологічним жахом нерозвитих істот творять таку огидну і страшну картину внутрішньої неволі […] що сучасним народникам треба ще пошукати нового ймовірного грунти, на який можна було б опиратись як на закон природи […] Твір непохитно веде думку до зруйнування колективістичного ідеалу […] а натомість покладає надію на окрему сильну особу" (Sriblians'kyi 1911a: 170).

Secondly, modernist aesthetic practices aimed at reshaping the way individuals constructed their 'self' and located themselves as subjects of power, ultimately recognizing the 'manipulability' of national identity; they recognized it as an expression of the individual's infringed right to choose her belonging on the basis of strong emotional attachments to a given cultural-political order. To a certain degree then, Ukrainian modernists challenged the traditional way of thinking about the nation as a primordial, genealogical community (cf. Kapustians'kyi's 1910: 467-8). Thirdly, Ukrainian modernist discourse was so contested because – in the long run – it constructed objects of ruling and large-scale social identities, which rendered the 'governable subjects' somewhat too independent (Kapustians'kyi 1910: 470-71).[36]

The cultural-political 'technology' of the modernists, therefore, was oriented to work upon the individual's sense of self. It focused on the processes of designing new forms of conduct and was concerned with how individuals adopt and internalize these. In this respect, modernist ideologues of nationalism sought to establish control over the process of 'self-making' of Ukrainians by redefining the structure of the inherited cultural *habitus* (i.e., reversing the relationships between the 'bottom' and the 'top') while endorsing the new ethos of individualism. For example, Ukrainka articulates the new objective in the following manner:

> The old romanticism aspired to liberate the individual from the masses, but only the extremely heroic individual; naturalism regarded one totally subordinated to the masses, governed by the laws of necessity and those, who manage to benefit from such laws […] The New Romanticism [i.e., Ukrainian modernism] aspires *to emancipate the individual within the masses,* to expand one's rights, to provide her with a chance to find like-minded individuals, and if the person is more advanced and active, to give her opportunity to lift up others to her achievements instead of

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[36] See a more general theoretical elucidation on policy as language in Shore and Wright, "Policy: A New Field of Anthropology" (Shore and Wright 1998, 18-24).

> descending to their level [thus allowing one to escape] the dilemma *of being for ever in a state of moral superiority or moral imprisonment.*[37]

Ukrainian modernists, consequently, established and maintained a boundary between the 'highbrow' and the 'lowbrow' cultural production for a number of reasons.

3.6. The High – Mass Culture Divide

In my view, the modernists in Ukraine mobilized the opposition between the 'high' culture (i.e., the modernist cultural production, created in accordance with West European standards of excellence) and 'popular' culture (i.e., the production of Ukrainian populist-realists) in order to further affirm the status of a progressive national-cultural leadership. This boundary was not only successfully used to claim differences in relation to the production of the Russian imperial centers but more importantly, it served the modernists to distinguish their cultural production from local realist-populist literature and art, which they perceived as 'retrograde' and old-fashioned. In addition, it was utilized effectively as a strategy of mobilization because it assisted modernist efforts to elevate the status and symbolic value of Ukrainian national culture as an essentially European and aesthetically sophisticated, modern institution. Finally, the introduction of such a boundary made visible the transformation of Ukrainian culture into a source of political power and its institution as the principal means of self-understanding in relation to the emerging egalitarian order of social organization and the novel manner of conceptualizing the relation between individuals and society (cf. Wagner 21; 26-28).

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[37] "Старый роматизм стремился освободить личность, – но только исключительно героическую, – от толпы; натурализм, считал ее безнадеждно подчиненной толпе, которая управляется законом нобходимости и теми, кто лучше всего умеет извлекать себе пользу из этого закона […] новоромантизм (i.e., Ukrainian Modernism) стремится *освободить личность в самой толпе*, *расширить ее права*, дать ей возможность находить себе подобних, или если она исключительна и при том активна, дать ей случай возвышать к своему уровню других, а не понижаться до их уровня, *не быть в альтернативе вечного нравственного одиночества или нравственной казармы*" (Ukrainka 1966, 192; author's italics).

Herbert Gans' description of high culture (1999)[38] as a separate type of cultural production that is characterized by its creator-oriented bias because it sanctions the values and ideals espoused by professional artists, critics, and scholars is helpful here to elucidate what the Ukrainian modernists perceived as 'high' culture. They envisioned it as an educationally transmitted culture that endorsed the values and ideals of the Ukrainian West-European oriented intelligentsia, namely nationalism, individualism and the cult of aesthetism in pursuit of one's absolute intellectual and spiritual growth. As Gans observes, the cohort of artistic intelligentsia claims expertise in the intellectual and aesthetic field because of its special training and skills. Consequently, high culture, in the view of this scholar, focuses exclusively on the "construction of cultural products, such as the relationships between form, substance, method, and overt content and covert symbolism, among others […] " (Gans 1999, 101). Its standards demand rigorous intellectual inquiry and extensive competence from the audience by placing "high value on the careful communication of mood and feeling, on introspection rather than action, and on subtletly, so that much of the culture's content can be perceived and understood on several levels" (Gans 1999, 101-102).

According to Gans, high culture is concerned predominantly with the exploration of abstract social, political, and philosophical questions and fundamental aspects of the human condition. It differs from the other 'taste cultures' because its creators, due to their extensive training and specialized education, more systematically and more intensively address complex and difficult societal assumptions and issues, often seeking to explain the essentials of human existence (Gans 1999, 103-104). In fact, because of its creator-orientation, high culture ignores the values of the audience while enforcing a belief that "the creator's intentions are crucial," and thus, by privileging the creators rather than the audience, "makes it easier for them to create [...]" (Gans 1999, 76). In particular, I recollect Kotsiubyns'kyi's articulation of concerns regarding the content of the new literature, which he ultimately conceptualized as a complex intellectual enterprise focused on exploring diverse aspects of Ukrainian reality while also delving into thorny philosophical, psychological, historical, and social-political issues (cf. Kotsiubyns'kyi's letter to Myrnyi from February 10, 1903; Kotsiubyns'kyi 1974, 280). His discourse suggests that the Ukrainian modernist intelligentsia decided to introduce the conflict of different taste cultures as part of their struggle to create the high national culture and to establish themselves as the creators of cultural values.

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[38] In general, I found his analysis of the relationship between different taste cultures and structures in contemporary American society to be very informative.

Coming 'late' on the European scene,[39] having recognized the economical, political, and cultural advances of the West, the Ukrainian modernists vigorously pursued the establishment and maintenance of a high national culture. Moreover, in their discourses, cultural activities were construed as a means of enabling the elites to mobilize the masses, naturally leading to the conceptualization of the national culture as the most important element of Ukrainian national identity (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 59). Once again, this is exemplified by Kotsiubyns'kyi's engagement in issues concerning the organization of public entertainment (1974, 103-117). Therefore, the modernist struggle to create and promote the cultural production of the artistic 'elites' as central in safeguarding and representing the collective identity assisted also the politicization of Ukrainian culture. The boundary between 'high' and 'low,' 'traditional' and 'modern' was also politicized thereby becoming a constitutive boundary of social identity (peasant [*selianyn*] vs. intelligent [*intelihent*]).

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[39] The implications of this 'belatedness' are cogently elucidated by Jusdanis (2001, 102-133). Goodall (1995) offers an informative historical analysis of the high and popular (mass) culture debate in the European intellectual tradition. In addition, Bourdieu (1984) has elaborated an excellent theorization of this intricate relationship.

Peter Goodall has claimed that culture "always becomes a burning issue in times of perceived change and conflict" (1995, xv). The attempt of Ukrainian modernists to construct and popularize 'high art' in their society is but another confirmation for the validity of this insight. Ukrainian modernist endeavors were inspired by their desire to valorize modernism while safeguarding their own 'ethnic' tradition (cf. also Jusdanis 2001, 100). Since the necessity to distinguish between 'high' and 'low' art in Ukraine resulted not only from class differentiations, but also from a fear for the integrity of the national ideal and an anxiety over the success of the experimental, new literature on the Ukrainian market,[40] it is logical to assume that their attempt to belittle the realist-populist tradition by ascribing it a 'lowbrow' status was another strategic mechanism that aided the modernist effort to re-define the relationships of power in the cultural field.

Gans has claimed that the prestige of high culture "derives from its historical alignment with the elite, [...] and from the status of its own public and its claim to cultural experise, which is legitimated by the many creators, critics, and scholars in its public. In this way, the standards of high culture receive more deference" (1999, 143). The significance of this is that the formation of an audience in addition to the application of the standards of high culture in print, university, and other social institutions, makes those standards more visible (cf. Gans 1999, 143). Essentially, this is why I interpret the Populist-Modernist debate in *fin-de-siècle* Ukraine as a political 'conflict,' centered on the issues of national identity, its content, and the appropriate methods of its symbolical representation. A close examination of the arguments presented by the opposing sides, clearly suggests that the dispute involved primarily issues of values and power relations whereby the modernist Ukrainian intelligentisa explicitly questioned the values and relations of power encoded in the artistic production of the more conservatively oriented representatives of the 'older' generation. In this respect, the critique of *prosvita* (educational, popular) culture elaborated by the modernists is a typical defensive strategy, "constructed to protect the cultural and political privileges of high culture" (cf. Gans 1999, 77).

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[40] Particularly informative in this respect is Kotsiubyns'kyi's correspondence with Myrnyi, Kobylians'ka, Kobryns'ka, and other Ukrainian intellectuals. In his letters, he explicitly poses the issue of creating an audience and expanding the market for modernist literary production by promoting the publication of the new literary production, while also catering to the taste of Ukrainian readership (cf. Kotsiubyns'kyi 1974, 223; 226-7; 280-1; 283; 292).

Within this frame of reference, the cultural formation the modernists proposed comprised of "those practices by means of which moral regulation aimed at giving unitary and unifying expression of what are in reality multifaceted and differential experiences of groups within society" (cf. Ong 1996, 738). For example, the aesthetic experience evoked by the masterful play with language and form in Ukrainian modernist literature, Ievshan sees as a mechanism of social cohesion. The impressionistic approach to life in his view offers the readers a complete and undisturbed emotional experience of national identity by affecting one's "inner psychological space" (Craib 1998):

> The artist is not the master of content, but the content rules over her; the artist is just an obedient, deprived of will tuning fork. The artist touches it to her ear and from this contact flows to her the essence of words. Actually, the mood flows. It gives [the creator] opportunity to sense the slightest vibrations, to capture the imperceptible nuances. With delicacy and precision of description, she is capable to convey the exceptionality or dullness [of her sensations] and to recreate the entire atmosphere of her experiences. What ultimately captivates one's spirit is the intimate tone, the proximity to real speech, which otherwise might not be noticeable in the replication of concrete images.[41]

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[41] "Не артист паном над змістом, а зміст панує над ним – його роля зводиться до послушного позбавленого волі камертону. Він хай тільки приложить своє вухо – з усіх речей поплине до нього їх єство. І той настрій дійсно пливе. Він дає змогу відчути найтонші дрожання, ловити найменші відтінки. З делікатністю та тонкістю малюнка можна получити і його яскравість, і досадність та відтворити всю його атмосферу, що уноситься над

One detects similar intention in Kostiubyns'kyi's illumination of modernist literature's objective as a "reflection of each moment in life [...] free from duty to represent the mundane of peasant life, but accurately representing the lifestyle of all social classes" (Kostiubyns'kyi 1974, 292).

At the time when the modernists declared their ambitions to become national leaders, "an excessive focus on regional cultures" was not any longer desired, because, as Herzfeld has proposed for the Greeks, "[...] [it would then] undercut the universalist claims of a modernizing elite" (cf. 1997, 98). Seen in this light, the nationalism of Ukrainian modernists displays characteristics similar to the Greek nationalism, and perhaps, to the nationalist projects of other local elites, who had to struggle to represent their politically 'marginalized' communities in front of the larger, international world. "As a result," writes Herzfeld, "local elites find themselves between a rock and a hard place: they cannot afford to admit to the international community the existence of internal disunities, yet their refusal to acknowledge such fissures saps their credibility before knowledgeable audiences at home and abroad." Under such circumstances, the anthropologist argues, "the political marginality and the idea of historical centrality are bound tightly together: *tradition is the nourishment of national identity* [...]" (1997, 92; italics mine).

The expression of this modernist ambition is evident in the numerous critical discourses that interpret high culture as central to the experience of nationality, and respectively see harmony as the 'job of culture,' granted that such unison was achieved not through "a consensus of the parts, work[ing] through with compromise," but the surrender of the autonomy of what the modernist creative intelligentsia considered outdated, marginal, and uncharacteristic elements of the modern individual and collective 'psyche' (cf. Goodall 1995, 19).

ним. А найбільше промовляє тут до душі – то се інтимність тону, близкість людської мови, яку можемо неначе бачути в перекладі на конкретні образи" (Ievshan 1912, qt. in Muchin 129).

Their strongest argument, indeed, became the claim that the culture they created represented the whole life of the Ukrainian society. Indeed, as their harsh criticism of the populist 'mass' culture suggests, they saw the realist uncritical emulation of the vernacular culture as a threat to the development and vigor of modern Ukrainian national culture. The new national culture envisioned by the Ukrainian modernists was hierarchically organized, entailing stable criteria for aesthetic evaluation and distinction against which the values and power relations represented in previous artistic production were explicitly questioned.

The critique of the 'mass' culture (including the 'invented' folk culture propagated by Ukrainophiles, populists, and so on) attacked predominantly the conservative political values of mainstream realist literature and art, encouraging exploration of different aspects of human behavior, which previously were not problematized or even noted (e.g., eroticism, feminism, the conflictual experience of identity, etc.). The liberalization of content, thus, was predicated on the necessity of creators to express and impose new standards and new values. Henceforth, the issues of what constituted cilivilized ways surfaced as a prime theme in Ukrainian modernist *belles letters* and criticism. The modernists, in other words, identified a knot of ideas that they considered suitable themes for high art, imposing in this way distinctions that sustained social stratification in the Ukrainian cultural-political space. Essentially, the modernist thematic concerns expressed the anxiety of the patriotically minded intelligentsia over its inadequate status as a colonially dominated and locally contested national-cultural leadership. Therefore, the problem of defining and protecting the originality of the Ukrainian national identity became also a focal point of their literary and aesthetic quests. As a result, the 'civilized' ways and behavior of the free creative individual for them represented the new mode of thinking, experiencing, and writing about the Ukrainian nation.

In my view, discussions on the principles of nationality elaborated by authors as Sriblians'kyi, Kapustians'kyi, Hruschyns'kyi (1911) and others, reveal consistent concerns with the definition of the Ukrainian nation's members as subjects 'located' within different power structures. Kapustians'kyi's discussion on the right of self-determination is particularly interesting for he insisted that the exercise of this right was a sign of social maturity. The critic recognized the change of nationality according to strong feelings of belonging as a supreme act of self-integrity, strong will and wisdom. According to him, individual consciousness, honor and emotional attachment should be the factors to influence one's choice of nationality. He pointed to the fact that nationality was not a fixed category, and to exercise the right of national identification required a lot of courage and determination (Kapustians'kyi 1910: 466-75). In the same line of thought, worthy of note is Ukrainka's interest in the issue of political ethics. In 1903, she wrote an article, entitled "*Zamitky z pryvodu statti 'Polityka i Etyka'*" (Ukrainka 1977, 253-256) that argued with M. Hankevych about the relationship between political terror, humanism and justice. In addition, I think that Vynnychenko offered the most consistent engagement with the issue of 'civilized conduct.' His principle of 'honesty with oneself' and his entire life-style as well as the aesthetic disposition associated with it epitomize the ethos of the 'new' Ukrainian citizen. In Voronyi's view, Vynnychenko's intellectual interests focused on unravelling "social-communal conflicts, the undermining of traditional life's foundations, the re-evaluation of old values, merciless analysis of the tormented […] mind of the intelligent, the struggle to preserve one's individuality, and the formation of the new avantgarde."[42] His artistic method allowed the writer if not to resolve his characters' moral dilemmas, at least to reveal their true sources: "honesty with oneself, which manifests itself most profoundly in the cultured and sophisticated individual."[43] As Voronyi acclaimed,

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[42] "соціально-громадські конфлікти, руйнування підвалин старого життя, переціновування старих цінностей, безощадний аналіз розбитої рефлексами інтелігентської душі, боротьба за індівідуальність і формування авангарду нових сил" (Voronyi 1996, 484).

[43] "чесність з самим собою, яка може набути найбільшої свідомості і

Vynnychenko's method was not a superficial cosmetic alteration of previous models and prescribed morality, but a way to upset, dislocate, and change traditionalized aesthetic and social norms (Voronyi 1996, 487).

In this manner, the divide between the high and the low cultural production maintained and utilized by the Ukrainian modernists in their evaluative practices of Ukrainian realist-populist literature, supported also the crystallization of a specific version of Ukrainian national identity, which aimed at 'transcending' the limitations of local history and geography. It stressed the role of imagination and emotional intersubjectivity (i.e., the shared sense of cultural identity) over the attachments to concrete places and the collective ('the people'). Because it articulated an essentially sophisticated, liberated, and modern ideal of 'self,' the modernist intellectual nationalism successfully linked the Ukrainian national identity with the 'high' European culture and philosophy.[44]

As Ong has noted, becoming a citizen "depends on how one is constituted as a subject who exercises or submits to power relations" (1996, 738). To transform individuals into citizens, was thus preconditioned on the development of what Foucault has identified as "the modern attitude", i.e., "an attitude of self-making in shifting fields of power that include *the nation-state and the wider world*" (qt. in Ong 1996, 738; italics mine). It appears to me that the consciously cultivated bohemian image and lifestyle, the rebellious temperament, and the scornful attitute to the populist revival of the vernacular tradition provide evidence for the subversive power of the modernist social engineering and sense of 'self.' One cannot ignore also the explicit relation between Ukrainian feminism and modernism, for the majority of initiators, and the most outspoken ideologues of Ukrainian feminism participated in the popularization of Modernism in Ukraine. They actively engaged in the public discussions, promotion, and

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найкращого виразу тільки в людини вищого культу" (Voronyi 1996, 484).

[44] Goodall elaborates cogently on the significance of this nationalizing strategy (1995, 96).

explication of its aesthetic ideology, and/or publishing of modernist experimental prose. Examples are profuse, to mention but a few: Kobryns'ka, Ukrainka, Kobylians'ka, etc. The issue is an important one, although I will not indulge in a theoretical exploration of this topic here. Worthy of mentionning are some probing steps into this area, undertaken by Pavlychko (1996, 83-103) and Tarnawsky (1994). However, I would like to note that the issue of 'civilized ways' surfaced in the polemics between Efremov and the Ukrainian modernsists in 1903 through the discourses of Ukrainka. Her letters show a deep emotional concern with the "improper tone" of Iefremov, and offer an implicit criticism of his masculine arrogance. "It costs me a lot of effort [to control myself] and not become sarcastic and insulting. I tried to avoid showing this. I want my response to be calm, distinguished from [Iefremov's] pueritlity *(bursachynny)* by its almost 'courtly' tone."[45] In this sense, Ukrainka engages in a subtle attempt to undermine the conventionally accepted model of male-female relationships and endorse a new, more civilized mode of comunication based on courtesy, mutual respect, and the recognition of women's equal status.[46]

I think it is necessary at this point to make a note about the notion of civility as it was constructed and manipulated by the Ukrainian modernists. However, before continuing with the analysis of this notion, I ought to make a point regarding the use of the terms 'civil society' and 'civility,' in light of current debates about the viability of these concepts and their usefulness (cf. Kumar 1993, Hall 1995, Rouner 2000, Edwards 2001, Chanders and Kymlicka 2002). Refraining from taking any sides, let me begin by stating that both notions are used here in their broadest sense, in most cases defined according to the anthropological and not strictly political usage of the terms. In addition, I agree with the position of Michał Buchowski, who maintains that in order for these concepts to be effective when applied to different cultural contexts, one must explore what these mean in each historical space-time continuum where they were formulated and utilized.

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[45] "Багато видержки мене коштувало, щоб не впасти в сарказм і не почати й собі «язвить», та я постаралась того не робити. Я хочу, щоб моя відповідь одбивала своїм спокійним, навить «рицарским» тоном від тої дикої «бурсачинни»" (Letter to O. Kosach from February 7, 1903; Ukrainka 1966, 131).

[46] Cf. also Ukrainka's letters to her mother (February 2, 1903), to Kobylians'ka (January 24, 1903 and March 12, 1903), and to Pavlyk (March 31, 1903; Ukrainka 1977,

There is no doubt that "individuals share some moral values and pursue their internalized goals via largely established institutions" (Buchowski 1996, 80). On the grounds of such normative consensus, civil society arises as the sphere which Hegel first located in-between "the family and the state" (qt. in Buchowski 1996, 80). As a result, two are the "prototypical possibilities" as Buchowski points out: "either the interests of the state and society converge, or they are in conflict" (1996, 80). More importantly, however, that does not mean that the formed free associations have to be explicitly political. According to Buchowski, "the anthropological concept of civil society is broader [since] it regards as part of civil society the formation of common-interest groups that are not overtly political" (1996, 81). In the light of Foucault's concept of transactional reality, the contemporary Polish anthropologist suggests that "the contours of [civil society] are inherently variable and open to constant modification" thereby rendering an alternative definition of the notion, which reads as follows: "Civil society is a [...] technology of governing and at the same time a mode of exerting pressure on the power of the state" (Buchowski 1996, 82-3). Although fairly vague, the advantage of his definition is that it opens a space for revision of fossilized Western theoretical concepts that do "not always fit in different cultural contexts," and thus are of limited use (Buchowski 1996, 83).

Ukrainka's epistolary oeuvre, suggests that Ukrainian modernists adopted the standard West European understanding of civility, which strongly accentuated the association of civility with courtly manners and 'good' (polite) behavior. Having said that, I hasten to point out that in the view of Ukrainian modernists the

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28; 29-35; 45-51).

notion of civility began to represent primarily a complex of cultural-political ideals that defined the personality of the true Ukrainian patriot. Therefore, it was articulated in relation to requirements of social participation and accountability. Let me recall again Vynnychenko's principle of 'honesty with oneself,' which presupposed honesty in recognizing one's Ukrainian identity and struggle to guard it from colonial coercion and intimidation. The best illustration of this point is the participation of Vynnychenko in the political struggle for Ukraine's national liberation. In this respect, the modernist writer himself offered a prime example of a true Ukrainian patriot. I interpret the self-awareness of Ukrainian modernists as the ultimate modernizing agency in both Ukrainian culture and society, and their promotion of the 'modernist' *habitus* as a manifestation of the 'civility' they championed, an idea that to some degree motivated their attempts to alter the collective identity as a psychological force to serve further the political and social needs of the Ukrainian nation. Accordingly, the gradual naturalization of the national identity as a core social value and the reification of the concept of the Ukrainian nation as the psychodynamic complex that linked the individual to the world order by defining and securing above all one's *personal identity* became the ultimate goal of their modernizing project.

Anthony Cohen's discussion of personal nationalism is also pertinent here. It will help me reveal the nature of modernist efforts to instill national identity as a subjective corporeal experience. Cohen maintains that nationalism is so elusive a concept that if it is not 'located' in the subjective living experiences of the person, it becomes a theoretical absurdity. In his view, "personal nationalism expresses the idea that people refract their identities as 'nationals' through their own selfhood." Of course, he quickly adds that personal identity does not "exclude the proposition that [people] may also construct their selfhood to express what they perceive to be the qualities and components of their national identities." Thus, he argues that the heart of personal nationalism is "the embodiment of national interests in the self, and inherent in one's very experience of the world"

(Cohen 2000, 161). His definition of personal nationalism reads: "That is the construction of nation in *terms of self*, or the *identity of nation and self*" (Cohen 2000, 163; Italics mine).

It seems to me that this form of nationalism is what Sriblians'kyi and other Ukrainian modernists espoused when articulating that: "The nationality we aspire is of predominantly ethical nature. [...] Ukrainianness must serve as an imperishable value. Ukrainianness, in my view, if seen in a moral perspective, must be the guarding of truth, that is to say, it must secure individual freedom."[47] Succinctly put, while the romantics and the populists 'invented' the 'Ukrainian People' as a distinctive albeit anonymous 'collective body,' the modernists turned the 'people' into a nation by singling out the individual as the building block of the collective unit. They constructed "the nation in terms of self" by ensuring the status of the creative individual as a new role model and an example of a civilized conduct. This became an essential part of their identity and cultural politics. Respectively, Modern Art and more specifically literature, they saw as an indispensable means in achieving this goal.

In a sense, the modernist national ideal can be briefly described in terms of a committement "to the common liberty of our people," which, as Viroli remarks, "means that if our country is unfree we have to work to make it free instead of leaving to look for liberties elsewhere, and if we are forced to leave, we have to continue to work in order to be able to go back to live in freedom with our fellows" (cf. Viroli 1995, 9). Respectively, the notion of 'civic virtue' was interpreted as capability "to stand up for the defence of common liberty and rights" (cf. Viroli 1995, 10). For example, Vynnychenko reacted with an excruciating desperation to the Russian government's repressive politics. On February 2, 1915, the eminent Ukrainian writer wrote in his diary:

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[47] "Національність до якої прагнем, має величезний етичний зміст. [...] Українство наше мусить виступити як вічна цінність. Українство, по моєму, в етичному розумінні мусить стать в оборону істини, цеб-то – свободи людини " (Sriblians'kyi 1910c: 735).

> Everything is prohibited in Kyiv, absolutely everything that can be banned. The word 'Ukrainian' even appears to be illegal. The minister of international affairs, S. D. Sazonov, in his pompous speech called us traitors in front of the entire Russia and the world. Our aspirations and our suffering before the whole world he called swindling […] We are worried, […] each one of us is overwhelmed by a heavy foreboding which ceases the heart: difficult, frustrating, pernicious struggle awaits us […] I have no mood for writing. It is depressing to wait but there is nothing else I could do.[48]

Ukrainka in a letter to M. P. Kosach, also reveals her innermost thoughts about the fate of her country. Her angst strongly resonates with the above cited emotionally charged personal discourse of Vynnychenko.

> I often see, […] imagine that my hands and neck are covered with bloody marks, which the chains of colonialism have left and I am ashamed because everyone can see these scars, and I am ashamed for myself before [other] sovereign nations […] When I move to Ukraine, I become even more restless, losing the last residue of repose I have. But that worries me not. Now we need not to strive for peace.[49]

The new function of literature as the expression of national culture and the most important institutional tool for making national citizens is clearly manifested in the works published in *Ukrains'ka khata*. In this respect, Sriblians'kyi's articles on the function of literature as a national institution and Kapustians'kyi's discourse on the right of the individual to national self-determination could be considered the most outspoken articulations of the cultural and identity politics adopted by the modernists. The principle understanding of both Ukrainian theorists is that national identity is expressed in the national culture sanctioning the values and dispositions of the European-oriented Ukrainian intelligentsia. The making of national citizens, therefore, they saw as a fundamental task of literary and other cultural production, convinced that it assisted the complex processes of national self-determination and collective naming ("inclusion of national selves and exclusion of cultural and political others;" cf. Carey-Webb 1998, 4).

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[48] "У Києві все заборонено, все, що можна заборонити. Слово 'українець' навіть вважається недозволеним. Міністер закордонних справ С. Д. Сазонов у своїй урочистій промові перед усією Росією і цілім світом назвав нас запроданцями, перед усім світом наші прагнення, наші вистраждані здобутки названо мошенством. […] Ми всі бадьоримося, будучи разом, а в кожного, мабуть, тяжким передчуттям стискується серце: важка, руйнуюча, шкідлива боротьба стоїть перед нами […]. І нема тону душі для писання. Нудно, тяжко ждати, а нічого більше не можна тепер" (1980, 151).

[49] "Мені не раз видається, […] мені видається, що на руках і на шиї у мене видно червоні сліди, що натирали кайдани та ярмо неволі, бо всі бачать тії сліди, і мені сором за себе перед вільним народом [Austrians] […] Як приїду на Україну, то, певне, мене ще гостріше дійматиме і страчу я остатній спокій, який там у мене ще був, та дарма. Я о тім не журюся. Не про спокій треба нам тепер дбати" (Ukrainka 1966, 145).

Bearing this in mind, it is not surpring that Sriblians'kyi demanded a literature that could not only name and linguistically identify Ukrainians but more importantly, have the capacity to integrate the Ukrainian people by offering persuasive psychological models of civilized behavior and patriotic conduct, deeply rooted in the social, political, and historical practices of the Ukrainian intelligentsia. The modernist *habitus* then was propagated as the most germane experience of both the modern self and Ukrainian national identity. It was established in opposition to the populist-realist representations and 'revival' of Ukrainian traditional culture, which to the West European oriented Ukrainian intelligentsia offered a baseline for evaluating the change they tried to enforce. As they assessed it, the substitution of the 'mass' produced, re-invented 'folk' culture as the benchmark of Ukrainianness with modernist high culture and the *habitus* associated with it, was a significant shift firstly because the modernists engaged in an even more aggressive demarcation of the ethnic boundaries between Russians and Ukrainians. In this way, they declared the exclusive rights of Ukrainian intellectuals to rule over the field of cultural production in the territories inhabited by Ukrainian speaking people, investing their position with prestige and power. The modernist critical quests, whose prey became the older generation of writers and poets, namely the realists and the populists, thus served to enhance their high social standing within the national community, and their authority to represent the nation both for insiders and outsiders alike. From such a perspective, it seems only logical that Ukrainian modernists talked about 'cultural aristocratism' and struggled to break away from the 'primitive' ethnographic tradition, i.e., the popular 'mass' culture.

In his article "*Apoteoza...*," Sriblians'kyi highlighted the unacceptability of the realist cultural production, pointing to the fact that, as he wrote: "The populists [realists] create culture not for the *nation* but for the *people* [...] They propagate as national culture that which they would not allow in their homes. They are creating culture of elements that they themselves would not let into their house."[50] His reaction to the realist tradition was based on the rebuke of literature's utilitarian function (as a tool for promoting literacy among the peasant masses). Sriblians'kyi's different understanding of literature as a national institution to express, enhance and strengthen unity and collective solidarity among different strata of the society inspires his poignant rhetoric (1909d: 420).

Let us recall that Sriblians'kyi criticized the populist-realist position as reductive, arguing that the function of literature was to communicate the experiences of the entire range of diverse social groups inhabiting the Ukrainian historical space (Sriblians'kyi 1909d: 421). Thus, the modernist critic voiced his concern with the making of national subjects. His rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion was straightforward: Ukrainians were not Russians and he discarded as outdated the necessity of negotiating such a boundary. In tune with Mikhnovs'kyi's radical pronouncements, which asserted the self-right of Ukrainians to an independent existence and called for "a battle" to win their own freedom as "people, as citizens, as members of a free nation" (Mikhnovs'kyi 1900, 213), Sriblians'kyi too proclaimed the necessity of the Ukrainian people's political liberation. Although his articulation was not as explicitly political as that of Mikhnovs'kyi, Sriblians'kyi's aesthetization of Ukrainianness epitomized by the "language of [the] free people," stemmed from the same sentiments and political agenda. For example, reacting to Semenko's radically experimental poetics, Sriblians'kyi voiced the following thoughts:

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[50] "[...] творять культуру не для нації, а для народу і по- народньому. [...] В тімто і річ, що українец пропагує для національної культури те, що його самого не вдоволяє. Будує культуру таких елементів, яких ніколи не пустить

> The future language will be a language of free people, not the limited scale of sounds [produced] by a degenerate. *Let us become free people* – then we will have a free, musical, and supple language which will ring forth in a symphony of magical sounds. This language will shine and blaze in one's eyes, will astound by the beauty of its gestures, will entrall the body with bliss. The future language is Beauty. The future life is Beauty. *This will be the language that will echo from the mouths of free people* […]" (qt. in Ilnytzkyj 1997, 8-9; Italics mine).

The critic severely disowned the narrow nationalism of his predecessors by regarding the realist-populist *prosvita* ideology as an obsolete and futile method for resolving the Ukrainian national problem. Associating the realists-populists with the Ukrainophiles, the critic abhored the type of autonomy demanded by the latter. Deeming the Ukrainophile position an expression of a false patriotism and anti-democratism, Sriblians'kyi was quick in accusing its advocates of sycophancy and betrayal of the Ukrainian national ideal by serving the assimilatory agenda of the Russian government.

> In politics, [the Ukrainophiles] demand autonomy shouting at their numerous meetings while in fact, they participate in the Russian political parties, which fight against Ukrainian autonomy. They crawl into anti-Ukrainian journals and newspapers, promoting the literature of Russian centralists and supporting the ideology of Russian centralism, […] nonetheless claiming that they demand Ukrainian autonomy. They do not need political independence […]. They simply replicate in a foreign idiom [the Russian government's nationalistic] nonsense, without organically feeling the meaning of their [own] words.[51]

собі в хату" (1912a: 354; Italics mine).

[51] "У політиці те ж 'Дайте нам автономію' кажуть на своїх 'числених' зборах, а сами працюють в російських партіях, які проті української автономії борятьcя. Позалазять в анті-уркаїнські журнали і газети, розносять літературу росіян централистів, підпирають працю ідеологів російсьского централисму, і […] кажуть про якусь автономію Уркаїни. Не треба їм і автономії, то лише з чужого голосу перехопили ненароком і повторюють безсмислено, не відчуваючи органично змісту своїх слів" (1909d: 425).

In his view, the exclusive focus on social and political issues, without the necessary work for the people's spiritual liberation eroded the power of the national ideal. As he contended, the profound interest in the individual's struggles to define her destiny, the rebellion of conscience (*protest sovisty*) against one's "miserable existence and spiritual delusions," "the cry of the offended honor, which protests against the cruel treatment of the individual, against the crude exploitation of one human being by another and [one's subordination] to the tradition, the clericalism, the state, and so on"[52] were the true expressions of real democratism, an intellectual position and practice that was open to the "quintessential problems of individual and social life." In this context, Sriblians'kyi's was convinced that the problems triggered by the emerging internal distinctions and group memberships within the Ukrainian public space were more important to tackle than the negotiation of Ukrainian identity in relation to Russia.[53] Therefore, he proclaimed that the 'political acculturation' of both the peasant mass and the intelligentsia, who in his view were "below the level of the current [European] thought and artistic aspirations" (1909d: 429) was of immediate concern.

According to Sriblians'kyi and others, the function of literature as a national institution made it an invaluable resource for the creation of a national identity to solidify unity within the Ukrainian public space. By assigning to each individual the responsibility for self-determination, the critic thus affirmed one's willful choice to become a 'cultured citizen,' i.e., an individual who freely and creatively contributed to the formation of a future independent Ukrainian state. The literature he required was one that prepared his fellow compatriots psychologically to accept and fight for their political rights. This literature inspired each Ukrainian to demand political freedom. In his view, "Our old literature is useless in the struggle for freedom because it does not address the core of the issue. Talking about freedom, it is concerned merely with minor forms of freedom, incapable of generating those *psychological foundations* that will nurture the power of protest against colonization."[54] Thus, the critic espoused the belief that the purpose of literary works was to teach Ukrainian people how to think, and how to question and articulate sophisticated visions of their collective fate and destiny. Defining nationalism as a moral position, Sriblians'kyi approached the problem as a critical moral issue. "The weakness of aesthetics is produced by the shortage of ethics" he wrote, further demanding that Ukrainian writers engage in the inculcation of European values and norms of civilized conduct because, essentially, these values and norms once internalized would impel Ukrainians to pursue their independence (1912a: 360). It is not surprising that he appealed for the creation of literature that spoke to all social strata. He insisted, in accordance with his modernist ethos of individualism, that such modern Ukrainian literature be effective in shaping subjective behavior by providing works that expressed the complex inner world of the educated (cultured) individual with all twists and turns, doubts, conflicts, crises and successes in her struggle for self-discovery and self-determination (1909d: 424).

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[52] "[...] нікчемного істнування, проти заблудів *свого* духа," "крик ображеної *чести*, що протестує проти знущання над людською особою, проти дикої експлотації людини людьми, звичаями, клерикализмом, державою і т.п." (1909d: 424).

[53] Ievshan too lamented the signs of ideological and formal "differentiation" in the Ukrainian cultural space (Ilnytzkyj 1997, 22). The modernist critic feared for the integrity of the Ukrainian national idea because – as Ilnytzkyj's insightful comments suggest – the leading ideologue of Ukrainian modernism saw those as a threat from 'inside.' To him, the situation was more alarming than the threat coming from the colonizing politics of the Russian tsarist government (cf. Ilnytzkyj 1997, 24-25).

Identification theory, especially in Bloom's revision, offers a viable model for explaining the modernist nationalization practices from a psychological point of view. This scholar claims that the perceived threat to national identity is the major factor for triggering the internalization of national values, symbols and cultural norms. As he writes, "mass mobilization is possible when the individuals in the mass share the same identification" (1990, 51). The scholar hastily clarifies that "the identification is made [...] with a model that provides the right mode of behavior in a situation of threat." The need for security is gratified through an ongoing communication of experiences of anxiety, vulnerability, and disadvantage, which in turn, render individuals to feel comfortable and protected by acting as a group. The pursued integration of Ukrainian society, in my interpretation, was predicated on the actual and alleged threat from Russia, suspicion towards Europe, and cynical rejection of the positions of all internal 'enemies.' The specific "projection of enemies" (cf. Vogler 2000) was determined by the manner in which Ukrainian modernists experienced their 'peripherality' both within the Ukrainian historical space and in relation to the world order.

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[54] "Навіть як класова, наша стара література не стоїть на відповідній висоті, бо кажучи про визволение, вона трактує про зовнішні форми возволення, не підготовляючи внутрішнього, псіхологичного грунти, на якому тільки й можно оснувати силу протесту проти зовнішноі неволі" (1909d: 431; italics mine).

To conclude, it seems to me that the call for freedom from the colonial master (Russia) and for international recognition of the Ukrainian nation's singularity and uniqueness, the modernists obscured with the rhetoric of high and low cultural production, establishing this opposition as a principle strategy of distinction that above all assisted the politicization of Ukrainian culture by emphasizing its increased symbolic value as a basic right that "should be placed alongside civil and human rights" (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 165). In short, the distinction between high and low culture served as a major classificatory category, which although explicitly aesthetic, served to strengthen Ukrainian national identification. It was used to communicate the patriotic intelligentsia's concerns with the centralization imposed by the Russian state and to keep ongoing the communication of experiences of anxiety. The boundary between the production of high and low culture was thereby ardently maintained because it was a constant reminder of the threat to the integrity of Ukrainian cultural and national identity.

3.7. The Treatment of Center and Periphery in Ukrainian Modernist Rhetoric

The periphery-center relationship, as some theorists of nationalism have argued, presents a key to understanding the dynamics of national self-determination of people who stay at 'the margins' or, rather, perceive themselves to be located 'at the margins.' As Cohen (2000) suggests for the Scots, the notion of periphery is implied in the presence of the significant *Other*. In the instance of Scottish nationalism, England was imagined as the 'enemy' and the relation to the English constituted the boundary that determined who belongs and who is excluded from membership in the nation. I find similarities between the thinking of Scottish nationalists and Ukrainian modernists in the sense that Ukrainian modernists also needed a significant *Other* in relation to which they felt 'peripheral.' In their theoretical discourse, Europe, in addition to Russia was constructed and reconstructed as the significant *Other* to assist the modeling of Ukrainian national identity.

The complex vision of periphery articulated by the modernist national ideologues warrants closer analysis. Unlike the Scots, who mainly constructed their national identity in relation to a single significant *Other* – England, Ukrainian modernists operated with at least two different notions of peripherality. Thus, Ukrainian modernists developed their aesthetic and political program by means of a double resistance: on the one hand, they continued to rebel against the dominating cultural production of the Russian colonial power. As a result, they vigorously dismissed the once popular, but now already outdated model for shaping the Ukrainian national identity, which Magocsi has labeled as "multiple loyalities" (1996, 362). This model identified Ukrainians as a culturally distinct group within the multiethnic imperial society, but did not seek political independence for the Ukrainian nation. The modernists, like Shevchenko before, denounced this principle to the extreme, both in cultural and political terms. Thus, the modernists fervently rejected the political positions of the Ukrainophiles and the populists in defense of their own exclusive position. On the other hand, because they struggled for power and authority with Ukrainian realists, populists, socialists, Marxists, futurists, etc., in order to affirm their position of 'aesthetic-emotional leaders' of the emergent Ukrainian nation, Europe, in their project, sometimes reluctantly, was 'essentialized' as the desired *Other*.

In the instance of Russian-Ukrainian interactions, it is apparent that the modernists sought the complete reversal of the relationship, trying to establish Ukrainian high culture as 'central' in the Ukrainian national space. This high culture was to encompass and impose unity on the ethnic minority cultures existing within its scope. For example, Kapustians'kyi in his article on the right to individual self-determination also addresses a number of very important questions of boundary regulations. Defending the right of the individual to self-determination, the critic asserted that prejudiced attitudes toward minority groups were psychological and social impediments to the exercise of national rights (Kapustians'kyi 1910: 468). He praised tolerance in the relationships between different minority communities, explicitly evaluating such behavior as "cultured." From this perspective, Kapustians'kyi recognized the treatment of Jews in the Ukrainian lands to be a "weak spot [*boliuche mistse*]," firmly declaring that anti-Semitism was shameful in a democratic and civilized society (1910: 468-69). He introduced the distinction between 'low' (*nyzhchi*) and 'high' (*vyshchi*) nations in order to criticize ethnic intolerance and bigotry, seeing such narrow-minded attitudes as a typical feature of the "psychology of the masses" (Kapustians'kyi 1910: 471-72). On these grounds, the modernist ideologue argues that the individual who dared to stand up to bigotry and discrimination, freely deciding on her nationality, deserved the highest respect (Kapustians'kyi 1910: 472-73). Ultimately, he espouses the harmonious and peaceful existence of different groups within the Ukrainian nation, resolutely maintaining its high status and prestige (Kapustians'kyi 1910: 473).

Since this topic remains tangential to my current concern, it should suffice to note that, apparently, the ethnic boundaries the modernists drew were, more or less, inclusive in relation to all other cultures and ethnic groups (Jews, Gypsies, White Russians, Slovaks, etc.) that dwelled in the Ukrainian lands.[55] However, the boundary with the Russian (colonializing) culture was strictly exclusive. Moreover, the negation of Russian culture was motivated also by the fact that the modernists began to perceive the Empire in a position peripheral to Europe, assessing it as a 'backwater' requiring itself the modernization of its society. In their uncompromising renunciation of Russian colonial identity as a measure for calibrating their own culture and national identity, we see an attempt to escape the prescriptive conditions of a given overbearing identity and its norms. The liberation was achieved by means of appropriating the centrality of Russian culture and transferring that to 'high' Ukrainian culture they were determined to create, sanctioning it as a source of national dignity and pride. The reversal is clear in Kapustians'kyi's (1910) and Sriblians'kyi's (1909b) texts mentioned above.

As previously noted, another distinction that proved operational in the modernist nationalizing politics was the relationship established with Europe. In this context, a more general notion of peripherality, which James W. Fernandez has defined as "peripheral wisdom,"[56] is worthy of discussion here. Ukrainian modernists used it to instill the "political perspective" that assisted the articulation of their differences from Europe. Furthermore, it is also possible to see their ambivalent attitude as an 'imported' model of behavior. Ukrainian modernists by means of such detachment posed themselves as part of the European intellectual milieu, and in a sense, enhanced within the Ukrainian community a particular view of European Modernism that essentially supported their image as cultural leadership. As Herzfeld (1997) shows, Greek intellectuals essentialized in a similar manner a particular vision of Europe in order to measure Greek distinctiveness. The scholar refers to the strategy as "the promotion of particular self-image and its calibration to a particular reading of Europe."

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[55] The modernists' broadminded attitude is the reverse of the alleged anti-Semitism of Ukrainian radical nationalists (cf. Kas'ianov 1993, 109).

[56] Cited in Cohen (2000, 166). In the words of Cohen, Fernandez makes the point that center and periphery posses different knowledge systems, the former – as the presumed site of power – being dogmatic and unified, the latter: perspectival, thriving upon diversity and multiplicity of individual perceptions. See also Fernandez's essay

Anthony Cohen, in agreement with Fernandez, has maintained that center and periphery are "not just categorical descriptions of social entity: they also describe ways of seeing and of knowing to be found throughout society." According to this scholar:

> Peripheral knowledge, or what [Fernandez] refers to as 'peripheral wisdom', is predicated on the differences between the peripheral society and that to which it is supposedly peripheral. To this extent, peripherality implies (and often values) diversity. Yet, the periphery is simultaneously an integral part of a larger unit (that to which it is peripheral), and with which its condition implies conjunction. This ambivalence characterizes social identities and identity-making on the periphery, since fundamental to them is the boundary between itself and the centre (Cohen 2000, 166).

From this point of view, it is not surprising that Ukrainian modernists were suspicious and very selective about what they imported from Europe. The ambivalence of their position[57] was occasioned by the need to preserve their unique identity while making themselves noticeable in the global ecumene. Embodying this perspective was the call to define a Ukrainian style that expresses the soul of the Ukrainian people while simultaneously speaking the universal

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"Peripheral Wisdom" (in Cohen 2000, 117-144).

[57] Fernandez maintains that essential characteristic of peripheral wisdom is the ambivalence with respect to the center. As he writes: "A feature of peripheral wisdom, therefore, would lie in its recognition of elemental vectors of human experience, and its suspicion of complications elaborated in the centre as a form of intellectual privileging." In his view, the ambivalence with respect to the center is triggered by "the desire at once to escape the identity constructions of boundedness and, at the same time, to celebrate and privilege the separate identity it confers" (2000, 132). According to him, such ambivalence produces an awareness of the artificiality of boundaries and their "constructedeness" and manipulability, which, as the anthropologists asserts, is an inexorable part of the knowledge of peripheral societies (Fernandez 2000, 133).

language of art (Sriblians'kyi 1911a: 108). In this sense, the modernists had to redefine also the frontier with Europe, and this is nowhere more explicit than in the writings of Ievshan and Sriblians'kyi. Similar concern surfaced also in the writings of Ukrainka and other modernist writers, who addressed the issue of Ukrainian identity from the position that the "destiny of Ukrainian national culture depend[ed] on its tuning to the world pulse, which can be perceived in diverse manifestations."[58]

Nevertheless, it was also clear to the new generation of patriots that while "culture, along with the nation that creates it, must constantly feel and react to the spiritual rhythm and progress of humanity, the best manifestations of human genius, are possible only through the uniquely national and the national essence."[59] In this sense, Europe, despite the fear of its 'centrality,' was cautiously constructed as a potentially beneficial *Other* that allowed the patriots to set standards in order to model the 'civilized,' cultured individual. It is clear then that Ukrainian modernists, particularly at the outset of the 20th century, attempted a symbiosis of 'traditional' values and 'modern' ethics, while at the same time denouncing explicit and uncritical identification with peasant culture and the ethnographic realism prevalent in modern Ukrainian literature. Their ambivalent attitude was expressed in the ultimate desire to reveal the Ukrainian variant of universal social tragedies. In their writings, the modernists proposed a criticism of their 'backward' society while indulging in a search for new ideals, revisiting the 'spiritual heritage of Europe,' avoiding direct association with the technological or overtly anti-democratic aspects of its civilization. They offered their aestheticized notion of Ukrainianness as a panacea for "the loss of a civic ideal, the weakness of national self-consciousness, the betrayal by the elites in their pursuit of 'miserable greed' […]" because as they saw it, "in the upper spheres of society there was the intelligentsia's self-devouring and kowtowing before the oppressor, while the lower classes, although morally pure subjectively, were almost completely submissive."[60]

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[58] "Доля національної культури залежить від її світового резонансу, який може проявлятися у наірізноманітніший спосіб" (Verves 1996, 72).

[59] "Головне: культура і народ, який її творить, мають постійно відчувати і реагувати на духоний ритм і поступ людства; найвищі прояви людського генія можливі тільки через національне неповторне і національно суттєве" (Verves 1996, 72).

Although they 'feared' Europe and were cautious about the models, attitudes, social and aesthetic dispositions imported from there, the early Ukrainian modernists compared their society to Western Europe in a positive note, determined to "[copy] the powerful Other" in order to subsequently "[overcome] this imitation" (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 89). The situation slightly changed in the middle 1920s because of the yet again changing social, political, and historical conditions in Ukraine that led, in the words of Ilnytzkyj, to "[…] the culmination of literary and cultural processes begun at the turn of the century" (1991: 258).

It was not until Khvyl'ovyi wrote his pamphlets, taking a definite stand in the heated literary discussion of 1925 that the fear of Europe surfaced as a real threat and entered Soviet public discourse as a prime issue (cf. Khvyl'ovyi 1925). This perceptible shift and the semantic and structural transformations in the social order associated with it, as suggested by Khvyl'ovyi's writings, was a response to the new historical and political developments occurring at the time. The October revolution in 1917 established new political parameters – Soviet communist rule. As Frederick Barth has argued: "under new political parameters, new leadership positions could be constructed and factional followings could be mobilized by appeal to inter-ethnic stereotypes and intra-ethnic interests" (2000, 32). The modernist national ideology reified in Khvyl'ovyi's program for cultural revival pursued the construction of a new political position for the Ukrainian intelligentsia as an echelon of national resistance against the Soviet communist rule. In this respect, I fully agree with Ilnytzkyj's view that Khvyl'ovyi's politics of culture was clearly modernist in essence as it, apparently, was elaborated as a conscious extension of the nationalist project which the critics, writers and poets associated with *Moloda muza* and *Ukrains'ka khata* had initiated and implemented at the turn of the century. It not only articulated similar goals and objectives for the construction of the Ukrainian nation and national idenity, but also employed a similar rhetoric and methods of mobilization, insisting on the creation of an 'elitist' and sophisticated national culture that openly challenged and undermined "all manifestations of petty provincialism and crudely ultilitarian [art]" (Ilnytzkyj 1991: 258).

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[60] "[…] втрата громадського ідеалу, кволість національної самосвідомості, зрада верхів у погоні за 'лакомствами нещасними,' самопожирання інтелігенції і запобігання її перед поневолювачем – наверху; майже тотальна покора хай і морально чистих суб'єктивно низів, – ось синтез усіх її творів" (Verves 1996, 70).

The writings of Khvyl'ovyi then are also important because they reveal the peculiar dynamics of Ukrainian modernist practice which, as previously mentioned, attempted disrupting the experience of a 'current modernity' through the careful revision of the inherited cultural traditions and their alignment to the latest developments in the world. The perspective of Khvyl'ovyi is broader than that of the earlier modernists for, as his theory of the Asian Renaissance implies, he operated within a larger geopolitical context, envisioning Ukraine as a 'spiritual bridge' between the East and the West (Eurasia, cf. Khvyl'ovyi 1993, 259). In fact, Khvyl'ovyi attempted to also widen the social basis of the national movement by insisting on the proletarization of Ukrainian national culture. This is a very significant change, which also affected his definition of the political ideal and the associated with it version of Ukrainian national identity. In the next section I will elucidate some of the most important differences from antecedent modernist articulations of the Ukrainain nation that transpired in Khvyl'ovyi's politics of culture and identity definition.

3.8. Khvyl'ovyi's Cultural Nationalism:
Ukrainian Modernism as *Ideologiekritik*

The starting point of my analysis of Khvyl'ovyi's contribution to the modernist national project is Ilnytzkyj's remark that "at a time when others were debunking Modernism from the point of view of the new Marxist ideology, Khvyl'ovyi saw it fit to defend the movement in his *Dumky proty techii*" (Ilnytzkyj 1991: 258). This was an essentially political decision that the patriot deliberately made. A cogent understanding of the political implications of Sriblians'kyi's 'spiritual aristocratism' and, as he called it, "*molodomuzivs'koi hihantomakhii*" (Khvyl'ovyi 1993, 224), which the writer evaluated as the most adequate intellectual resource for nationalization and mass mobilization, informed his particular imagining of the nation. He asserted "certain consonance between his position and those of the Modernists" (Ilnytzkyj 1991: 259) as a strategy of distinction that secured continuity in the development of the Ukrainian national movement. In his view, Ukrainian modernism was a singular "natural phenomenon" that characterized historical periods preceding an imminent national-cultural revival (Khvyl'ovyi 1993, 224). Thus, Khvyl'ovyi's acceptance of the modernist inheritance motivated his particular manipulation of the modernist position in order to affirm his novel national-cultural agenda.[61]

The consciously constructed similarity with the preceding generation of Ukrainian modernists assisted Khvyl'ovyi's agitation for participation in the processes of social change and nation building. By embracing the potential of Ukrainian modernism both as an established literary tradition and as a powerful position of social criticism to attack the currently experienced socio-economic and cultural-political environment (Khvyl'ovyi 93, 224), the critic, on the one hand, implicitly proved that the achievement of Ukrainian modernists had been to form a readership and to wedge a market niche for their cultural production. In other words, his discourses celebrated the success in establishing an autonomous Ukrainian artistic and literary field, and a national culture that, as I have tried to show, opened space for further legitimation of the Ukrainian nation as a discursively constructed, coherent totality (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 46; 88). More significantly, however, Khvyl'ovyi's criticism demonstrated that Ukrainian modernism, as a subversive cultural practice was indeed the most efficient, locally generated 'technology' of identity definition.[62] On this grounds, the patriot attempted to further expand the modernist project, acknowledging that his epoch was the next logical step in the development of the Ukrainian national revival (Khvyl'ovyi 1993, 234).[63]

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[61] Cf. Ilnytzkyj, who acknowledges that the "linkage between art and the national question was Khvyl'ovyi's preeminent issue, one which was also the most politically controversial" (1991: 261).

In Khvyl'ovyi's vision, key factors were needed to bring about the cultural revival of the Ukrainian nation: Westernization, de-Russification and a break with previous traditions, including the mass literature created by his contemporaries. Thus, he wrote:

> Ukrainian art must find the highest aesthetic values. And on this path the Vorony's and Ievshan's were a phenomenon of social importance. For us the eminent '*muzhyk*' Franko, who considers Flaubert to have been a fool, is less dear than (let this not be *personalia*!) the aesthete Semenko, this tragic figure against the backdrop of our backward reality (Khvyl'ovyi 1926, 273).[64]

On the other hand, the writer also used the constructed similarity with early Ukrainian modernists in order to undercut the discursive imagining of the all-Russian Soviet identity, which was sanctioned through the official state politics of culture. In this manner, he also at once communicated his distance from other crystallizations of Ukrainian national identity available for manipulation to Ukrainian intellectuals at that time (Khvyl'ovyi 1993, 219-226). Consequently, Khvyl'ovyi's texts even more explicitly demonstrated that unresolved national questions fueled the Ukrainian modernist project. For this reason, his intellectual take on the Modernist position, especially if considered against the background of the then occurring historical and socio-political changes, proves to be both similar and different from previous modernist discursive imaginings, relying on different mobilization techniques that aimed at further strengthening the capacity of Ukrainian modernism as a historically specific cultural and political practice. In my view, the most significant aspect of Khvyl'ovyi's powerful 'peripheral wisdom' and a-typicality was the novel way in which he tackled the principal comparison made earlier by Ukrainian modernists, namely the relationship between center and periphery.

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[62] Cf. his letters to M. Zerov, *Radians'ke literaturoznavstvo* 7 (1990): 3-15 and 8 (1990): 11-25; also, Khvyl'ovyi 1993, 224; 234; 236. Succinctly put, here Khvyl'ovyi admited that Ukrainian modernism had been a "healthy, logical and inevitable stage in the process of social differentiation [and] the awakening of new social forces" (qt. in Ilnytzkyj 1991: 259).

[63] Cf. also Ilnytzkyj's analysis of Khvyl'ovyi's letters to M. Zerov (1991: 259-262). This scholar suggests that Khvyl'ovyi "attributes extraordinary civic meaning to the modernist position, seeing it as a contribution to nationbuilding" (1991: 259).

[64] Page citations refer to the abridged English translation in Lindheim and Luckyj 1996, 269-277.

The recognition of the artificiality and manipulative value of the metaphor of boundary is encoded in Khvyl'ovyi's title, *Ukraina chy Malorosiia* (Ukraine versus Little Russia), which plays on a recurrent Ukrainian modernist discursive opposition between center and periphery. The modernist revision of the symbolical value of the historical term Malorosia turned it into totally negative image. In this sense, *Malorosiia* and *malorosiianyn* as identity descriptors were transformed into introspectives stereotypes that expressed the anxiety of the Ukrainian patriotic intelligentsia over an unwelcome 'peripherality.' Sriblians'kyi's articles "*Natsional'nist i mystetstvo*" and "*Apoteozis…*" were precursors of Khvyl'ovyi's articulations. Semantically speaking, this metaphor has had a pervasive influence on the Ukrainian national imagination, thus becoming an important element of the symbolic self-construction and representation of Ukrainians as located 'at the margins of Europe.' The dichotomy *Ukraina* versus *Malorosiia* is more than just a simple labeling, because it manifests a deep split within the Ukrainian national psyche, which even today is considered 'irredeemable.'[65]

The change of political regime in the 1920s produced the need for re-establishing two particular boundaries: the inter-ethnic one with Russian culture and the intra-ethnic one with the uneducated, or semi-educated mass Ukrainian readership. Recognizing that the success of Ukrainian cultural revitalization depended on a more definitive renouncement of Russian culture as a model-system and the ability of Ukrainian intelligentsia to mobilize a mass audience for its native cultural production, Khvyl'ovyi and others engaged in a heated battle in defense of art that was essentially Ukrainian and of high aesthetic worth. As Khvyl'ovyi pointed out: "One of art's most important characteristics is its unrestrained impact on the developed intellect" (1993). Another of his articles explicitly challenges official positions on the Ukrainian issue, posing questions of high importance for the development of Ukrainian national culture and arts:

> We are faced with this fundamental and unexplained dilemma:
>
> Are we going to approach our national art as fulfilling a service (in the given instance, serving the proletariat) and as forever subordinate, forever a reserve for those of the world's arts that have attained a high level of development?
>
> Or, on the contrary, while retaining the service role shall we find it necessary to raise its artistic level to that of the world's masterpieces?
>
> We believe that this question can be resolved in this way:
> Our formulation will lead to real results only if our society begins to view our art in the context of artistic encounters on a world scale (Khvyl'ovyi 1926, 272-273).

Myroslav Shkandrij, while analyzing the literary debates of the 1920s in Ukraine, indicates that it was a crucial period for the development of Ukrainian culture's development. As he writes, the events of 1917-1919 "shook the

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[65] Interestingly enough, contemporary Ukrainian scholarship relies on the connotations first ascribed by the modernists to the name Ukraine, in order to argue the importance of Ukraine in the current world order. Consider for example, Subtelny's semantic dissection of the name Ukraine in his introductory essay on the ambiguities of Ukrainian national identity (1999, 1).

Ukrainian intelligentsia from its quietist slumber and provided the impulse for a revival of literary [cultural] life" (Shkandrij 1992, 19). In the course of the ensuing decade, Ukrainian intellectuals had to make particularly difficult decisions, which concerned the survival of the Ukrainian nation. When the successive colonization of Ukrainian lands began with Ukraine's transformation into a Soviet republic, in the eyes of Khvyl'ovyi and other late modernists the Ukrainian nation represented still an ideal rather than an actual psycho-political reality. To the spread of Bolshevism and the introduction of new assimilatory politics of Sovietization, which posed a different type of obstacle for the growth of mass mobilization and nationalization of Ukrainian society, the descendants of the modernists reacted by proclaiming a policy of Ukrainianization that aimed at reinvigorating Ukrainian cultural life, setting firmly the distinctive cultural and politicial markers of Ukrainian national identity (Shkandrij 1992, 8).

The new literary program launched by the successors of the late modernists – the alliance of the Olympians around Zerov and the VAPLITE, headed by Khvyl'ovyi – addressed several important questions. First, it insisted on faster Ukrainianization, which essentially meant faster mass mobilization and nationalization of Ukrainian society. Second, it also articulated a different view on the relationship with Europe as the significant *Other*. Khvyl'ovyi and like-minded Ukrainian intellectuals, being aware of the 'threat' potentially posed by European inclusion or complete identification with European identity insisted on, as Shkandrij writes, on "the assimilation of European models in order to move beyond imitation to the discovery of one's own unique identity" (1992, 8). Eager to establish Ukrainian culture on the firm grounds of its own national traditions, Khvyl'ovyi denounced superficial Westernization based on a naïve faith in progress and technology and urged on "the thorough and sustained study of European works, knowledge of languages and familiarity with the internal logic of European developments" (cf. Shkandrij 1992, 8). As the modernist critic put it: "When we speak of Europe, we are thinking of more than its technical expertise.

Bare technique is not enough for us; there is something more precious than the latter. We conceive of Europe also as a psychological category which thrusts humanity forward, out of *prosvita* onto the great highway of progress (Khvyl'ovyi 1993, 253; cf. also 226-30).

This preoccupation with European identity and harsh criticism of mass culture (identified by Khvyl'ovyi as *prosvita* philosophy, a concept which bears close resemblances to what Sriblians'kyi earlier had defined as "primitive culture" – *prymityvna kul'tura*) manifests the anxiety caused by looking at the past. This anxiety, as Herzfeld maintains, betrays "the symptoms of a deeply wounded sense of social, cultural, economic and political dependency" (cf. 1997, 105-106). Khvyl'ovyi's modernist nationalism in this sense, was a "form of remedial political action," which addressed a deficient or "pathological condition" and proposed to solve it (cf. Brubaker 1996, 79).[66] Thus, many saw the cure as a break with populist 'ethnographic' traditions, de-Russification and the creation of Ukrainian proletarian culture, which pursued a "harmonious synthesis of the individual and the collective (Polishchuk, qt. in Shkandrij 1992, 25).

The specificity of Khvyl'ovyi's position then lies in the fact that he insisted on alignment with European standards and firmly acclaimed that Russian culture should not serve as a model for the new *proletarian* Ukrainian culture. Adamantly proclaiming that Ukrainian culture had to carve its own, independent path of development, his rejection of Russian culture as a model for the new proletarian Ukrainian culture was based on three major arguments. First, he claimed that Russian culture was "ethnographic." Second, it was also a competitive presence on the Ukrainian market and as such, needed no protection and excessive political support. "The new watchword, which is directed against the Russian literature, is for a healthy rivalry between the two nations not as nations but as revolutionary factors" (Khvyl'ovyi 1993, 252; trans. by M. Shkandrij in Lindheim and Luckyj 1996). Third, the fundamental differences of the Russian and Ukrainian *Weltanschauung* made it impossible for Russian literature to express the positive optimistic mentality of the Ukrainian people. As Khvyl'ovyi argued: "Russian literature, which did not witness the birth of its indigenous bourgeoisie, [...] which did not experience the pathos of capitalist development [...] was unable to create a positive *Weltanschauung*" and remained trapped in its specific "dead Christian spirituality" and decadent pessimism (1993, 245; 249; trans. by M. Shkandrij in Lindheim and Luckyj 1996). Here is another of Khvyl'ovyi's arguments:

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[66] Particularly interesting in this respect are Khvyl'ovyi's thoughts, expressed in his pamphlet *Ukraina...* (1993, 241; 265), and utlimately, his theory of the Asian Renaissance, which, if considered from another point of view also reads as a critique of Spengler's historical pessimism (Khvyl'ovyi 1993, 253-260).

> You will find no parallels in the 'life of Moscow' for our discussion. And this is not in the least because one participant or another in the Ukrainian dispute is more talented than one or another in the Russian (God forbid!), but because Ukrainian realities are more complex than the Russian, because we are faced with different tasks, because we are the young class of a young nation, because we are a young literature that has not had its Lev Tolstoys and which must have them, which is not in 'decline' but in the ascendant (Khvyl'ovyi 1927, 276).

Essentially, what Khvyl'ovyi's discourses reveal is that the ideological pressure and political tensions resulting from the enforced Sovietization of Ukraine called for sharp distancing and displacement from the centralizing power of Russian communist rule. Thus, he utilized the spatial metaphor of center-periphery as a means to enforce his project of Ukrainian nationalization in opposition to the state. He appropriates modernist ideology because of its power to resist colonializing discourses by projecting onto external 'enemies' those negative emotions, frustrations, and anxiety associated with the experiences of the Ukrainian intelligentsia's disempowerment and peripherality, consequently leading to beneficial identification with the Ukrainian nation and identity.

In my view, the insitence on 'situating' Ukrainian identity within the broader context of Europe, was an intellectual strategy similar to the type of social creativity described by Smith and Bond (1999, 189). Hence, I tend to interpret it as a strategy that enhanced the appeal of the promoted version of collective identity by the Ukrainian modernists. This identity was perceived to be more suitable for foreign-dictated display and international interaction. As a result, the attempts of Ukrainian modernists to regulate the national image for both insiders and outsiders alike aimed at controlling national identification by keeping the introspective stereotypes strictly in the domain of "cultural intimacy" (cf. Herzfeld 1997, 3). Of course, such awareness made their position particularly resilient as their social criticism grew to be extremely millitant (Khvyl'ovyi 1993, 219; 224).

Khvyl'ovyi's discourse also shows that pairings of internal (Ukraine) and external (Little Russia) ethnic names were an "important consequence of conquest and other forms of domination" (cf. Herzfeld 1997, 16). In this light, the denigration of the populist 'revival' of Ukrainian vernacular culture functioned also as a source of permanent embarrassment (cf. Herzfeld 1997, 7). The dichotomy Ukraine versus Little Russia respectively was utilized as a spatial metaphor to signify ideologically contrasted cultural identities. One of course, was positively charged and represented the desired complex of national-cultural identification (Ukraine). The other one (Little Russia) was transformed into an introspective auto-stereotype, employed selectively and often, cynically, with the intention to foster patriotic passion and enthusiasm. Both stereotypes were offered to all social actors for assessment, internalization and selective deployment (cf. Herzfeld 1997, 17). Apparently, the Little Russian identity was offered as a 'self-colonizing' representation and the use of this label, as Khvyl'ovyi's discourse suggested, was encouraged in situations of self-criticism and self-doubting. Ironically, it was meant to provoke one's stronger identification with the Ukrainian nation.

Khvyl'ovyi's rhetoric relied on the mobilization of these introspective stereotypes at a time when the communist policy of totalitarian rule through "ideology and terror" ominously cast its shadow over the Ukrainian lands. As Shkandrij explains, the importance of Khvyl'ovyi as "a political and ideological figure lies in the fact that he explained why Ukrainianization had not made the progress it should have and challenged the party to admit that social inequality and political power in Ukraine ran along national lines" (1992, 66). The struggle had acquired somewhat new nuances, which turned the literary debate into a perilous ideological battle. Shkandrij notes that the Ukrainian national question was the burning issue of the day not simply because it was unresolved, but more importantly, because it became a crucial argument in an attempt to challenge and redefine Marxism as the official political doctrine of the Soviet state.

> To some extent it was a question of using Marxist theory to support and legitimize his [Khvyl'ovyi's] argument, but it was also a question of changing and developing a Marxism that had inherited biases. The statist and great-power interpretation of Marxism, which, in its Bolshevik version, proposed the idea of a unitary Russian state and assimilatory practices, proved too well ensconced to be shifted. Khvyl'ovyi's attempts at correction, innovation and change were soon to be branded as 'nationalist deviations' (Shkandrij 1992, 66).

Within this context, the urgent need of Khvyl'ovyi and others to assert the modernist Westernizing position, which in Ukraine was already a recognized political technology of subversion and resistance, can be viewed as a social effort to endorse a change that might have given rise to a new social movement. It definitely was read as opposition to the Leninist regime and handled as a 'dissenting,' heretical ideology (i.e., as bourgeois nationalism).

Christian Joppke has offered an informed interpretation of the nature of revisionism, dissidence and nationalism as forms of opposition to Leninist regimes. The scholar remarks, and I agree with him, that in communist regimes every form of independent action, including movements for cultural revival and national renascence, are not single-issue politics since "their very existence contradicts the principles of the regime" (1994, 548). By definition, such actions have what Joppke calls "a system-transcending implications" and are treated as a form of activism that defies the legitimacy of communist rule and its monistic power structures. Thus, Khvyl'ovyi's modernist philosophy bears close resemblance to what Joppke has defined as a peculiar form of East European dissidence, by means of which later generations of intellectuals also responded to the deficit of differentiation and legal rules in a society that itself was "couched in the imagery of utopia and history-making" (1994, 551).

I find Joppke's account of nationalism in Leninist regimes particularly useful in elucidating the nature of Khvyl'ovyi's modernist position as a political technology of resistance and dissidence. Dissidence, Joppke defines as "anti-politics and activism by default, which makes the world turn by *not* doing certain things" (1994, 551; author's italics). In his view, dissidence in Eastern Europe was an attempt to "contain the reach of politics that is by definition state controlled." As he maintains, unlike in Western Europe, where social movements usually proceeded by appropriating "political spaces that were considered previously private or exempt from public scrutiny," in its Eastern counterparts the logic was the reverse. "Since the official space of politics is occupied by communist rulers," writes Joppke, "dissident politics resorts to the pre-political sphere." And he continues: "It is not accident that artists and literary intellectuals have played such a prominent role in East European dissident movements" (1994, 551).

According to Joppke, the perennial issue of dissident politics "is the reclaiming of basic individual rights." These are strongly associated with the idea of citizenship and interpreted from the perspective of a "political community of equal and free members" (1994, 551). It is apparent that Khvyl'ovyi's modernist nationalism pursued precisely this. As the writer insisted, the Ukrainian intelligentsia had to become European in order to fulfill its mission as creators of Ukrainian national culture. But that could be done only if the culture was built to endorse the ideal of a civic person.[67]

> Here, finally, we come upon the *ideal of a civic person*, who over the course of many ages has perfected his biological, or more accurately, his psycho-physiological nature, and who is *the property of all classes*

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[67] Cf. also Ilnytzkyj, who interprets Khvy'lovy's view as an extension of the Modernist position (1991: 261).

> […] *This is the European* intellectual *in the best sense of the word. This, if you like, is the sorcerer of Wurttemberg who revealed grandiose civilization to us and opened up limitless vistas to our gaze. This is Doctor Faust, if we conceive of the latter as the inquisitive human spirit* (Khvyl'ovyi 1926; qt. in Ilnytzkyj 1991: 260; emphasis in the original).

Shkandrji has explained the above as "an attempt to formulate a Marxist argument for cultural and political independence while simultaneously developing the humanistic side of social-democratic thought […]" (1992, 66). In my view, Joppke's interpretation takes this argument further by pointing to the fact that the maintenance of the private-public distinction was probably the most vital strategy for the recovery of civil society in the context of a regime whose main purpose was its systematic destruction. This view sheds a slightly different light on Khvyl'ovyi's constant rejection of mass culture and his relentless struggle to bolster the acceptance of the modernist individualist ethos. It is clear that Khvyl'ovyi recognized the formalization of the boundary between 'high' and 'mass' culture as a prime necessity because it served his effort to dissociate himself from the official party politics of culture and identity. In a sense, it also assisted his critique of Marxism and attempts to revise the official attitude of the Communist party to the national question. The maintenance of this boundary, then, became both a strategy of distinction and dissidence (cf. Khvyl'ovyi 1993, 241-2).

Joppke has emphasized the importance of maintaining the private-public distinction under conditions of communist rule when he writes: "Aware that Leninist regimes are at odds with the pluralism and individualism that citizenship entails, the dissident position sought to vindicate free spaces in which citizenship could be restored, if not *de jure* then *de facto*" (1994, 551). Khvyl'ovyi, whose political vision, perhaps, could be seen as a precursor of later Ukrainian dissidence, sought the establishment of a genuine public sphere in which, in Joppke's terms, "people are no longer subjects but 'citizens' in the sense of fully enfranchised members of the political community" (cf. Joppke 1994, 553). The institution of the private sphere, especially in the Ukrainian historical space was an imperative for two reasons. On the one hand, it would have contributed to the framing of the Ukrainian nation as a civic polity, thus affirming the status of Ukrainian society as a modern European nation and potentially, easing access for Ukrainian national-cultural production to the European market. On the other hand, it would have increased the prestige of the Ukrainian intelligentsia in the eyes of the international community and ensured its status as Ukraine's national-political leadership. It is not at all surprising, therefore, that Khvyl'ovyi so vigorously engaged in the defense of modernist individualistic ethos, which also was a clear cry for political independence of the Ukrainian nation. The link that connected Khvyl'ovyi with his predecessors from *Moloda muza* and *Ukrains'ka khata* was very important for the critic, because at the time it provided him with a legitimate political tool for the manipulation of the Ukrainian public space. For example, in a letter to Zerov, the critic wrote,

> I attribute to the representatives of our modernist Europe an enormous *civic meaning* because I look at things not from the point of view of those syrupy-sweet principles of *populism which retard national development* but from a deep understanding of the *national question*. I dare say that this 'cursed question' will cease to stand in the way of progress only when the nation fully can express itself, when, to be more specific, its art attains the highest aesthetic values. In this respect, the Voronyi's and Ievshan's were a genuine civic phenomenon, one could say, a red [communist] one (qt. in Ilnytzkyj 1991: 260).

As Joppke explains,

> While aesthetics offers a medium of expression untainted by political manipulation [at least at first sight], the impulse and content of dissident politics is distinctively moral. [. . .]
>
> To be sure, the connection of politics and morality is an attribute of social movements as such, which always denounce existing power structures in the name of moral standards of justice. But in Leninist regimes, 'living in truth' has some specific connotations that are without parallels in the West, such as putting the individual up front in a society that defines the collectivity, or restoring to the only sphere that is left free of ideological manipulation (1994, 551).

From this perspecive, the modernist aesthetics of Khvyl'ovyi worked at two levels; first, it undermined the collectivist epistemology of Marxist ideology, thereby finding a way to overcome the tension between individual and collectively defined society. On the other hand, it also 'appropriated' the exclusively private space of 'artistic creativity' and aesthetic judgment, imbuing it with explicit political ideals, aspirations and issues.

> Since the Ukrainian nation has striven for its liberation over a period of several centuries, we consider this to be its irresistible desire to express and realize fully its national (not nationalistic) features.
>
> These national features express themselves in its culture and – in conditions of free development, in conditions similar to those prevailing in the present situation – do so with the same verve, the same will to achieve parity with other peoples that we witnessed in the Romans, who in a relatively shorter period of time narrowed the gap with Greek culture. National essence has to play itself out in art as well. [. . .]
>
> Because in fact national features are nothing but the ordinary features of the culture of a given nation. [. . .]
>
> Our formulation of the question flows logically from our Party's policy on the national question (Khvyl'ovyi 1926, 271-272).

On such premises, he asserted the distinctiveness of the Ukrainian nation and demanded its autonomous development and expression in an independent Ukrainian proletarian culture. In this sense, his modernist nationalism was a reaction to the violation of one of the most fundamental anthropological facts, as Joppke observes, "the fact that humans complete themselves through culture" (1994, 556). "In a world," the scholar proceeds, "where cultural boundaries are drawn along national lines, nationalism was the inevitable response to the violation of cultural particularity by communism" (1994, 556-557).

Shkandrij interprets the literary debates of the 1920s also as a "conflict between two strategies for the developing of a mass movement" (1992, 180). As he has phrased it, "Pylypenko was making peasants into Ukrainians; Khvyl'ovyi was transforming Ukrainians into intellectuals." In Shkandrij's view, despite the fact that the objective was the same – the making of the Ukrainian nation, the processes were very different and each required a different kind of activist.

"Khvyl'ovyi," he writes, "argued that the first, elementary stage of Ukrainianization was a job for the school system. If, however, one wanted to produce extraordinary writers, then young people had to be provided with challenges. Whereas the movement's 'tail' was growing rapidly in the predominantly Ukrainian villages, its 'head' still remained underdeveloped" (Shkandrij 1992, 180).

In other words, the conflict essentially was over the tactics of national mass mobilization that would successfully lead to the achievement of national independence in conditions of missing elitist cultural institutions. As Shkandrij rightly points out, the Discussion was not about irreconcilable class antagonisms but "had more to do with rhetoric or demagogy" (1992, 180). In my view, the disagreement in fact was over the nature of the much-needed 'common culture' as the core of the modern Ukrainian nation. It seems that all of the literary debates since the conception of Modernism in Ukraine were debates over the self-expression of Ukrainian elites in contrast to the dominant 'mass' (either populist realist or socialist) culture. Accordingly, the continuous clash of the top-to-bottom approach (the modernist national ideology) with the bottom-to-top approach (the ideology of mass culture) nurtured a persistent disagreement between Ukrainian intellectuals, who sought to create a suitable model for a unifying Ukrainian national culture.[68] Then, the major dispute between 'lowbrow popular' (mass, *prosvita* culture) and egalitarian 'high' culture, running like a red thread throughout the late 19th and entire 20th century history of Ukraine, also lies at the heart of the rigorous process of defining the national image, a process that is hardly completed today. In this sense, the history of the Ukrainian modernist imagination can be appreciated through the perception of Dominique Schnapper, who in a separate context has stated:

> **If one agrees to define a democratic nation by the never fulfilled aim of creating a political society by transcending concrete roots and specific**

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[68] I think that Ilnytzkyj has argued a similar point (1991: 261-2).

> memberships, there are no ideas of a nation, but one, unevenly and differently achieved, following an ever-different pattern according to the political project which is at the basis of nation-building.
>
> The different nations are both 'ethnic' and 'civic' but are differently 'ethnic' and 'civic.' In every national tradition, there are different means and institutions to transcend the ethnic realities of the society by the civic principle of the political domain (Schnapper 1996, 233).

In Ukraine, modernist literature and its aesthetic ideology was discovered and used as an institution of signification and means to transcend the 'ethnic' realities in order to endorse "the civic principle of the political domain." The emphasis put on the creation and institutionalization of Ukrainian high culture was triggered by the modernist desire to find a balance between the ethnic and the civic definition of the nation. Essentially, the modernists conceptualized high culture as an intercession where the congruence of the political and cultural principles sustaining the existence of the Ukrainian nation could be achieved. The search for Ukrainian identity continues at present in a different social-political reality, and Ukrainian modernists, as Shkandrij asserts, provide the new symbols of "creative potential for a new generation that is once more charting a new course" (1992, 185).

From the analysis conducted here, it should be clear that Ukrainian modernists did what was crucial, from their point of view, to ensure the survival of an emergent Ukrainian national culture. In the absence of a nation-state, they performed "a [different] segmentation of the global flow" (cf. Foster 1991, 238), thus "making" the national culture existent within the context of the world system. What they also did was to establish Ukrainian literature and arts as modern institutions of signification, vital for the success of the nation building process. Through the efforts of Ukrainian modernists, these two fields of social practice obtained autonomous status. In the context of Ukrainian *fin-de-siècle* society, the act was revolutionary because literature, and by extension the arts, during the years of Soviet domination continued to be the institutions most responsible for the preservation of Ukrainian distinctiveness. For a long time these remained the only two agencies that embodied and maintained in space and time the concept of Ukrainian national-cultural identity. Perhaps, this is why in the early 1990s when Ukraine finally achieved its independence, the contemporary writers and poets assumed a clear modernist-like stance with respect to the arts' engagement with social and political issues. To put it in Oksana Zabuzhko's words, contemporary Ukrainian art and literature should "[…] devote itself without any reservations to things 'eternal' (the only thing that ultimately interests art!), to primordial questions of love and death, to the essence of being human and to the meaning of life" (1990). The renowned contemporary author (much in accord with pronouncements by Viktor Neborak, Iurii Andrukhovych and other compatriot artists) affirms the autonomy of the aesthetic sphere, declaring that art should not serve political and social ends. Yet, in the light of the discussion proposed here, I think that the modernist position in the 1990s was recalled again because it provided a particularly powerful ideology of subversion and resistance, which successfully obscured artists' interests, engagements and investments. In short, it was once again mobilized as an effective 'political technology' of social criticism and permanent resource for civic activism and social change in defense of the fundamental universal principles of human existence, further democratization and liberalization of Ukrainian society.

4. BULGARIA: THE INSCRIPTION OF MODERNITY ONTO THE COLLECTIVE BODY

4.1. The Politization of Ethnicity: The Bulgarian Nation State

> The nation disordered
> Patriots come forth.
>
> Lao-Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*

The next two chapters continue examining the work of the modernist social imagination, shifting the focus of attention to the efforts of Bulgarian modernists to nationalize and modernize their 'people' at the turn of the 20th century. My purpose is to illuminate the differences imposed by the local socio-political conditions, and to outline the similarities in the patterns of modernization of Bulgarian and Ukrainian society, i.e., two European nations that conceived of themselves as 'people' located 'at the margins of Europe.'

In the early 1900s, Bulgaria was a newly formed national state. The machinations of the Great European Powers, involving their rigorous attempts to redefine the continental geo-political order after the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78, occasioned its birth. The intervention of the West European countries enforced the conditions of the Treaty of Berlin (July 1, 1878), according to which the territory of the Bulgarian state was significantly trimmed compared to the initial agreement between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, which defined the state borders to include all territories populated by Bulgarians (Crampton 1983, 22-23; Detrez 1997, 8). The Treaty of Berlin divided Bulgaria into three parts.

The Principality of Bulgaria was constituted as a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire. Eastern Rumelia (currently encompassing the territories in the Southern part of the Bulgarian nation-state)[1] was granted the status of autonomous province within the Ottoman Empire, while Macedonia (the so-called Western territories) remained its integral part. In essence, the intervention of the Great Powers reduced the territory of Kingdom Bulgaria almost in half (64, 500 square kilometers; Crampton 1983, 23), therefore leaving large populations of ethnic Bulgarians outside the borders of the nation-state.

The revision of the Treaty of San Stefano (signed on March 3, 1878) left bitter feelings in the Bulgarian intelligentsia for a very long time. As Crampton acknowledges, " [...] San Stefano gave the new nation almost all it could ask in territorial terms and was to remain for generations after 1878 the national ideal of the Bulgarian people" (1983, 22). Thus, the nationalist ambition of the Bulgarian elites to re-unite all Bulgarians inhabiting the Balkan Peninsula and their attempts in re-constituting San Stefano Bulgaria as a leading geo-political force in the region determined the course of Bulgarian history until the end of the World War II. In his book *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey Through History*, Rober Kaplan, an American journalist, aptly captures the essence of the Bulgarian tragedy with a metaphoric statement: "What emerged in the second half of the 19th century was a smoldering and dismembered ghost of a nation. Bulgaria was the modern world's first 'fashionable cause.' The West long ago forgot this, the Bulgarians never did" (1993, 216). In short, Bulgaria of the early 1900s was a national state, fresh on the global scene, burdened by a plethora of internal and international antagonisms and fervent, unresolved territorial aspirations (cf. Pundeff 1994, 27; Hall, R. 1996, 2-3, and Detrez 1997, 8).

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[1] These territories were unilaterally proclaimed part of Bulgaria in 1885. However, it was not until 1909 that the Ottoman Porte officially recognized the union of Eastern Rumelia and the Principality of Bulgaria and granted full independence to the Bulgarian state.

Roger Brubaker (1996) has argued that there is good reason to study separately the ethnocultural nationalization of the new nation states that emerged in the 19th century after the break up of the multicultural European empires. Countries like Bulgaria, Hungary, Greece, and so on, he calls "nationalizing states,"[2] insisting that they represent a "distinctively modern form of politicized ethnicity" (1996, 83). "Pivoting on claims made in the name of the nation," the governing national-political elites of such states, as this scholar underscores, were concerned with issues of "political control, economic well-being, and full cultural expression within 'its own' national state" (Brubaker 1996, 79). Respectively, the discourse inspiring mass agitation, although based on the same core lament that the identity and interests of the nation were improperly expressed by the extant political institutions and practices,[3] tried to evoke and mobilize particular "subdiscursive sentiments" that assisted the nationalization of the existing political entity (cf. Brubaker 1996, 79). A case in point, presenting a particularly powerful expression of such sentiments is Stoian Mikhailovski's analysis of the state of affairs in the first decade of the 20th century. In his discourse, the Bulgarian writer examined the reasons for the inadequate political governance of the Bulgarian nation-state, communicating also a strong dissatisfaction with the official solutions of the national problem. He eagerly articulated a necessity to reform the current mentality by 'educating' politically both the intelligentsia and the people. As he maintained, in their willful blindness they failed to grasp the true meaning of liberty, equality, and democracy (Mikhailovski 1924, 103). The writer mobilized poignant introspective stereotypes (Herzfeld 1997). He called the Bulgarians "former Turkish slaves" (*бившите турски роби*) declaring that because of the lasting colonial oppression, the national psyche was corrupted, comprising of primitive feelings and deadening, animalistic instincts that rule over people who enduringly have been deprived of respect and human dignity (Mikhailovski 1924, 111). Clearly, in order to impart his vision, Mikhailovski operated with "subdiscursive" sentiments actuating strong feelings of shame, guilt, and embarrassment. In his critique, key metaphors – conveying the felt anger and frustration – provided images of "disease" and "decay" (1924, 114), which were also used to motivate a negative comparison to Europe, one implying an inferior and 'deviant' development of the Bulgarian nation-state. This implicit comparison aimed at provoking the patriotism of readers through shock.

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[2] Brubaker defines the "nationalizing states" as "states that are conceived by their dominant elites as nation-states, as the states of and for particular nations, yet as 'incomplete' or 'unrealized' nation states, as insufficiently 'national' in a variety of ways" (1996, 79).

[3] See Dr. Krŭstev 1898, 92-94; Mikhailovski 1924 (Page citations refer to the reprints in Elenkov and Daskalov 1994). Both authors urge for a radical transformation of the established political institutions through compulsory implementation of West European parliamentary democracy as the first step in the 'political acculturation' of the Bulgarian nation.

More to the point, Brubaker (1996) also indicates that the persuasive rhetoric of the elites in the aspiring nation-states addresses an allegedly deficient or 'pathological' condition, and uses a powerful utopian vision and romantic language to extol political solidarity and cohesion among society's members. This is not surprising. Brian Parkinson and other psychologists have stressed that any attempt at persuasion involves "the deliberate expression of emotion in order to evoke a particular kind of audience reaction concerning some topic of concern." If one conceives emotions as "social roles supplied by the culture to deal with situations where norms for action are in conflict" (Parkinson 1996, 671), then the overzealous adulation of San Stefano Bulgaria as the national ideal and the highly emotional rhetoric used by the Bulgarian intelligentsia and political elites seem to be on the order of the ordinary. Their purpose was to evoke strong feelings of love and loyalty to the nation-state, given that these arose "as a function of society's simultaneous respect for, and neglect of, the individual." In this sense, as will be demonstrated later, part of the primary meaning of patriotism was the "idealization of the loved one [the nation] and reciprocally of oneself, providing a means of preserving self-worth (as demanded by society) within a system which typically has little time or money for the individual's needs" (cf. Averill, qt. in Parkinson 1996, 674).

In the nationalizing discourses of aspiring states, the metaphors of healing, resurrection, revival, etc., constitute benchmarks of national self-determination, instigating strong beliefs in the forthcoming great success of the nation (Brubaker 1996, 79). All representatives of the Bulgarian intelligentsia employed this strategy. It surfaced in the writings of the national poet, Ivan Vazov, as well as his opponents from the Modernist camp. It saturated the propaganda literature published by Marxists, Liberals, Conservatives, and other political fractions. Despite the differences in their modernizing agendas, Bulgarian intellectuals depended on this strategy to express both the excitement and distress caused by the historical events befalling the Bulgarian *ethnos*. For example, Vazov's tributes commemorated the Day of Bulgarian Liberation (March 3) by rejoicing at the sublimity of this moment, which in the poet's view symbolized the rebirth and ultimate 'new' beginning in the history of the Bulgarian nation. In his speech, published in 1881, the writer eulogized:

> The strongest and deepest feelings to move one's heart unite all Bulgarians on this day for they now act as one. Even though we are a divided and fragmented [nation] this day eliminates all barriers the enemies have set between us. [...]
>
> Blessed is the nation that has in its history a date, which through the feelings it inflames and the memories it ignites [...] gives the people hope in the future and faith in their historical mission [...].
>
> [This day] hands down to us two things. First, there are the indestructible ties

> of love and gratitude that bond us with our brothers, the Russian people. Second, there is the transcendent national-political ideal, enshrined in the Treaty of San Stefano whose accomplishment we ought to pursue at any cost.[4, 5]

According to Brubaker, the feeling that the national cultural history begins with the arrival of modernity is overpowering, provoking a thorough examination of previous traditions and models of self-identification (1996, 79). Apparently, such emotions are communicated in order to encourage citizens to participate in the state-building process. The memorandum issued by the Bulgarian Ministry of Learning on January 5, 1916 offers another example of such emotional manipulation (Koneva 1995, 61-63). This programmatic document used highly emotive language, infused with compelling patriotic passion and faith in the future of the Bulgarian nation. "The more a given nation is permeated with the national ideal, the more it is aware of its natural rights, without being lured to pursue foreign ideals. Moreover, if the national intellectual and material resources are highly organized, the nation's prosperity is for all time ensured," wrote the

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[4] Най-силните, най-дълбоките чувства, които могат да развълнуват човешкото сърце, съединяват в тоя ден в една мисъл целий български народ. Разкъсани и разединени, тоя ден събаря всичките граници, които враговете ни са поставили помежду нас. […]

Честит народът, който има в историята дата, която чрез чувствата, които възбужда в него, чрез възпоминанията, които му наумява, може […] да му даде вяра в бъдащността му, в историческото му призвание. [...]

Той ни завеща тия две неща: връзките нерушими на признателност и любов, които ни съединяват с братский ни руский народ, и великий политически народен идеал, осветен от Санстефанский договор, към изпълнението на който трябва постоянно да се стремим (Vazov 150-152).

[5] See also Vazov (1957, 159, 172) and Slaveikov (1959, 66). In his article "*Blainove na moderen poet*" (Dreams of a Modern Poet, 1903), the modernist critic wrote: "Awaiting the new times, poets are the prophets who will lead the masses into the future. This is their tribulation and sublime happiness. The longing for the imminent, for what is to come, for what is emerging is overwhelming, affecting every one of us" (В предчувствие за новото, поетите, негови уяснители, вървят пред редицата на обикновените смъртни. Това е тяхната мъка и висше щастие. Копнежът към онова, което е на път, което е близко, което ще дойде, обзема всецяло техните чувства [Slaveikov 1959, 66]).

unknown author of this memorandum.[6] According to the author, it was crucial that "[we] look at the state of affairs somberly, yet optimistically, for this optimism will rekindle [the soul of the new generations], their will and faith in the forthcoming. It will refresh and strengthen their vision of new possibilities." [7]

Some Bulgarian historians have referred to this attitude as "cultural optimism," arguing that it played a key factor in securing the survival of the emerging national community (Koneva 1995, 61, note 66). In the eyes of turn-of-the-century Bulgarian intellectuals (Konstantin Gŭlŭbov, Ivan Shishmanov, Dr. Krŭstev, Boian Penev, and others), this expression of "cultural pathos" characterized "periods, aiming at 'outshining' the achievements of the past" (qt. in Koneva 1995, 61); it was the only self-respectful and dignified way to imagine the advancement and affluence of a marginalized[8] and fragmented nation. I agree with Koneva who believes that such cultural pathos communicated not only the ambition of Bulgarian intellectual elites to surpass the past, but more importantly, epitomized a conscious philosophical position that was essential to the success of all "modernizing offensives." I shall offer a more thorough examination of this attitude once the focus of attention shifts specifically to the Bulgarian modernists' cultural revolt. Here, suffice it to say that, in my view, this ideological perspective stemmed from the particular exigencies that determined both the subjective and collective experience of the Bulgarian nationality at the turn of the 20th century.

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[6] Колкото една нация е проникната от своя идеал, колкото тя е в съзнание за своето отечествено право, без да ламти за чуждото, колкото по-умело са организирани нейните интелектуални и материални сили, толкова тя е по-сигурна за своето съществуване (qt. in Koneva 1995, 61).

[7] [...] да гледа трезво на нещата в света, но и да се сгрее в нейната душа, нейната воля и нейната вяра в бъдещето и да се ободри и засили нейният взор към светли перспективи (Koneva 1995, 62, cf. also Vazov 1957, 14-15).

[8] Cf. Achebe's statement that in the "nineteenth century English mind, [...] Bulgaria was the psychological equivalent of the 'Congo of King Leopold of the Belgians' or [...] 'whatever' " (qt. in Moore 2001: 122). In Moore's view, the Balkans represent "the West's original third world, its nearest quasi-oriental space" (2001: 122).

Chronologically speaking, the period of Bulgarian Modernism (1890s-late 1930s) coincided with the time of intensive construction of the national political, legal, economic, social, and cultural jurisdictions. The Bulgarian political project involved the creation of those institutions that represented the authoritative power of the nation-state as "a container – the safeguard and limit – of modernity" (cf. Wagner 1994, 7). The process of building "the new Bulgaria" (Dr. Krŭstev 1978, 12) was controversial, slow, and uneven. The inclusion of the Bulgarian population into the modern institutions such as the police, the army, the state administration, and so on meant also a disruption of the traditional societal order. These transformations were painful for they entailed the "re-embedding of society's individuals into a new order – to be achieved by means of an increasing formalization of practices, their conventionalization and homogenization" (cf. Wagner 1994, 17).[9]

Anthony Smith, has argued that the nation perpetuates pre-existing ethnic feelings and institutions (1998, 1999). In this way, the contemporary theorist assures, the political forms of the nation-state are dependent on previous "political experiences" and models of power relations (cf. also James 1996, 183-84 and Schnapper 1998, 19). In this respect, the choice of the political form of the new Bulgarian nation-state was not accidental but involved a process of negotiation between local traditions and the political structures available on the 'global market.' Thus, the accepted model of state building relied on the continuity of popular pre-liberation social and political institutions. For example, a prominent role in the organization of social life in the new Bulgaria continued to be played by the local patriarchal and professional guilds (*zadrugi*), which gradually were transformed into modern commercial, financial, and industrial enterprises. The network of existing elementary, middle, and high schools was preserved and further developed. The church parishes as social structures remained one of the most effective forms of administrative and social organization. The *chitalishta* (literally, reading rooms) were another form of social organization popular in the pre-liberation period, which grew in number at the beginning of the century.[10] The *chitalishta* hardly changed their function and purpose, continuing to serve as a type of art and cultural centers that advanced new ideas and ideals through the popularization of West European and Bulgarian literature and arts. As Detrez remarks, although "known to all Balkan peoples in the nineteenth century, including the Turks" [such centers] were "extremely popular among the Bulgarians, who considered them a means of raising the cultural level and the patriotic feelings of the nation" (1997, 90).

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[9] In the view of Weber, the modern state is a political association that successfully monopolizes the legitimate exercise of violence and its authority is specifically concerned with commands and prohibitions (qt. in Geuss 2001, 30). The abstract structure of the state bureaucracy, i.e., "offices endowed with powers, warrants and resources which are distinguished sharply from the contingent human occupants of these offices" (Geuss 2001, 45) required a certain degree of impersonality and alienation that the traditional social structures did not posses.

In this respect, it is also interesting to note that the Bulgarian army was formed initially from volunteers, who aided the Russian army during the Liberation war of 1877-1878 (Detrez 1997, 30-31). Another particularly prominent political institution that was imparted from the past was the national liberation organization which had been founded in Bucharest in the late 1860s and was known as the Bulgarian Revolutionary Central Committee (*Bŭlgarski Revolutsionen Tsentralen Komitet*). This political formation put the watchword for Bulgarian independent existence and served as a coordinator of the political activities and armed actions during the second half of the 19th century. Its post-liberation successor, the Bulgarian Secret Central Revolutionary Committee (*Bŭlgarski Taen Tsentralen Revolutsionen Komitet*) operated in the autonomous province of Eastern Rumelia in the 1880s-1890s, preparing the Union of Eastern

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[10] The first such center was opened in Svishtov (1856). By the beginning of the 20th century, the number of *chitalishta* grew rapidly, and in the 1930s there were 2,356 such institutions serving the cultural and educational needs of a large regular membership (over 100,000 regular members; cf. Deterz 1997, 91).

Rumelia and the Kingdom of Bulgaria (Detrez 1997, 76). Even clearer was the continuity between the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO, 1919) and the Internal Macedonian-Adrianopolitan Revolutionary Organization (IMARO), which Damian Gruev founded in 1893. The purpose of both political organizations was the liberation of Macedonia and the "implementation of administrative reforms promised by the Ottoman government" in preparation for the unification of these areas with the Kingdom of Bulgaria (Detrez 1997, 170). As Detrez points out, "during the Balkan Wars and the World War I, the IMARO joined the Bulgarian Army operating in Macedonia and by the end of the war, formed a provisional government" (1997, 171). He also suggests that both political organizations enjoyed "the behind-the-scenes support of the royal palace and [the Bulgarian] rightist political circles" (Detrez 1997, 172). The relationships of these pre-liberation political structures with the post-liberation internal and international political institutions (the monarchy and the ruling political parties) did not end there. Later developments demonstrate the active participation of the IMARO's successors in the internal and international politics of the Bulgarian state (Detrez 1997, 172-173; 207-213). Essentially, what all these examples reveal is that, in many instances, a simple cosmetic re-arrangement of the old institution was performed, while its competencies and functions were sustained.

The tensions between the pre-liberation political structures and sentiments, and the emerging new forms of cultural and political bonds surfaced above all in the founding political acts of the state. For instance, the first Bulgarian Constitution accepted in Tŭrnovo in 1879, defined the political organization of the ethnic community as a constitutional monarchy; an intentional act that suggested a compromise between the Western ideals of liberal democracy and the local traditions of political governance. Paradoxically, the acting constitutional principle embraced a double standard in defining the rights and obligations of Bulgarian citizens. The 'people' were liberated but not ready to practice their freedom, therefore, the Constitution imposed limitations on individual autonomy. It failed to express the fundamental principle of political liberalism symbolized by the values of equality and liberty as ends in themselves and to acknowledge that the democratic nation was a community of citizens distinct from the state.

Both models of political organization, which came into being during the constitutional debates, i.e., the Conservative and the Liberal, sought the source of political authority in an abstract supra-collective entity ('the people' or 'the Law'), which originated in the undivided collectivity of the ethnic group (Elenkov 1994, 22). As one Bulgarian historian hastens to point out, such conception of democracy proceeds from the understanding of a completely homogenized ethnic space that can tolerate individual differences and autonomy only to a certain degree (Elenkov, ibid.). Thus, the founding political act of the state became a gesture of idolizing the past while negotiating a new image for the Bulgarian community on the world scene. It constituted the nation as a "natural and primordial" ethnic group with a collectively remembered history that the evolving new order had to "preserve in the present and project into the future with as little change as possible" (cf. Treanor 1997).

This rigidity was particularly noticeable in the field of cultural production where the majority of the existing cultural institutions were directly inherited from the past. Indeed, between 1878 and 1918 ten cultural institutions controlled and regulated Bulgarian cultural life. The majority of them already existed in the pre-liberation period, coming now into the governance and central management of the Bulgarian state. The process of centralization took place over a period of several decades, a fact that the Bulgarian intellectuals conceptualized as a serious impediment for the nation-formation. Nevertheless, the established system of cultural institutions, although rather sparse, practically concluded the development of the state institutional structure and became a vital factor in the promotion of the state official politics of culture.

As Wagner has emphasized, cultural institutions were essential to the modernizing project because they provided "self-understandings in relation to modes of social organization and to the relation between individuals and society" (1994, 21). The noticeable delay in regulating the formalization of the rules and resources to govern the cultural life of the Bulgarian nation-state was due to the priority given to the legalization and empowerment of political structures (Manafova 1987, 92; Koneva 1995, 21-22). Thus, the state-building project emphasized certain aspects (the development of political, military and judicial structures) over others (the development of economic institutions and the infrastructure), which preconditioned the uneven and inconsistent modernization of Bulgarian society (Koneva 1995, 21-22).

In addition, there was little political stability in the newly found state. In 1881, the first Bulgarian King, Aleksander Batenberg, suspended the Tŭrnovo Constitution. It remained so until 1883 when the National Assembly consented in augmenting the King's power and political prerogatives. Later on, the founding political act was constantly challenged by subsequent heads of state, suspended once again in 1934, and never restored. The polarization of political life was typical at a time when Bulgarian liberals and conservatives struggled for power. By the end of the 19th century, the workers' and peasants' party emerged, trumpeting their claims for political participation and control. As Detrez indicates, "from the turn of the [20th] century on, the Bulgarian political life suffered from cliquishness. Parties were often founded not with the aim of advancing a political program but of satisfying the ambitions of individuals" (1997, 9). Moreover, governments rose and fell quickly, thus leaving no noticeable trace. "Those that were more durable," writes Detrez, "often acted dictatorially," straining to the extreme the fragile political balance. *Coups d'etat* were the normal means of political change (1997, 10). The situation was further aggravated by the growing political ambitions of the Bulgarian monarchs, who persistently worked to establish "personal regimes that allowed [them] to reign without much interference by the National Assembly" (Detrez 1997, 10).

Even so, Bulgarian society in the beginning of the 20th century took satisfaction in a highly educated intelligentsia, gradual economic growth and "social security, health care, schooling, and so on that were on a higher average level than elsewhere in the Balkans" (Detrez 1997, 10). Still, slow cultural institutionalization and nationalization resulted in an incomplete formulation of the national project, which generated a sense of 'belated' cultural development. The psychological complex associated with the idea of 'belatedness' became a permanent feature of the Bulgarian self-definition, affecting deeply the confidence of Bulgarian intellectuals as producers of cultural values. In turn, the internalization of this 'belatedness,' which was expressed in the conviction that a languid and insufficient modernization was a structural flaw of Bulgarian society, posed the problem of cultural distinctions between 'us' and 'them.' There was anxiety over the formulation of the Bulgarian cultural identity and the models that were to be 'imported' from Europe in order to modernize – what was perceived to be – a 'backward' Bulgarian demos (*narod*).

In spite of the intelligentsia's beliefs, the cultural nationalization of the political entity presented one of the most important objectives of the state-building project (Radeva 1982, Bozhkov 1985, Manafova 1987, and Koneva 1995). The creation of national citizens and the conclusion of the process of nation-building were clearly the focus of the state administration, motivating its vigorous attempts to establish control over the cultural expression of the Bulgarian nationhood. The official politics of culture, however, derived from the same paradoxical rationale that governed the construction of political and economic structures in the Bulgarian nation-state. They fed on the blending of traditional and modern principles of governance and organization, which on the one hand, motivated the "exaggerated desire for authentic sources, [the revival] of [...] a mythic set of heroic, purer ancestors who once controlled a greater zone than the people now possess" (cf. Moore 2001, 118).

On the other hand, the official *raison d'être* insisted on 'mimicking' models of the West. This defined the peculiarly Bulgarian pattern of culture building at the outset of the 20th century. The governing cultural-political institutions utilized pre-modern executive models and outdated organizational structures, which reified the informal, voluntary, and free participation of individuals and groups as producers and consumers of Bulgarian national culture. At the same time, the formalization and centralization of cultural practices and habits were compulsory, performed with the ambition "to promote cohesion among the members of the nation through bonds of debt and association" (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 33). As one scholar contends, "The public nature of national culture [expressed in the system of public rituals and symbols] allows it to demand obligations from its members" (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 33). Those compulsions stemmed from the participation of individuals in the cultural life of the state, having "a greater sanction than physical coercion" (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 33) because they actuated the emotional experience of Bulgarian nationhood (Vazov 1957, 150).

Nationality, as some psychologists have argued, is an emotional experience that strongly depends on culturally supplied aims (Parkinson 1996, Craib 1998, Vogler 2000). By providing an evaluative frame of reference, the emerging Bulgarian national culture and its institutions promoted "implicit and explicit expectations about interactions [that] affected the ways in which [public celebrations and cultural events] were playing out in the interpersonal arena" (cf. Parkinson 1996, 671). These became important emotional episodes, influencing deeply each member of the Bulgarian community by enforcing a sense of belonging and patriotic duty, strengthening both the political and the cultural bonds between the members of the emerging "abstract collectivity" (cf. James 1996). In this respect, all public holidays, and particularly those that explicitly celebrated the experience of nationality (i.e., the Day of Bulgarian Liberation, the Day of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, etc.) assisted the creation of the national myth. This was a master-narrative that circumscribed all notable and lasting events from the past and present history of the state, thus enabling the communication of the nation's uniqueness while simultaneously commanding respect from the 'outsiders' (Vazov 1957, 161; cf. Parkinson 1996, 668-669).

Although the official cultural policy was often inconsistent and vacillating, it served the sole purpose of drawing together the community of citizens by means of endorsing the Bulgarian ethnic values and norms as the placeholders of political as well as cultural cohesion. In this context, a pivotal act that legitimated the Bulgarian nationalist idea was the so-called "Memorandum Regarding National Patriotic Education" (Decree No. 12353), issued by the Bulgarian Ministry of Learning on October 17, 1913. This document reveals the main objectives of the post-liberation educational and cultural system, insisting that young Bulgarians develop a "strong social instinct," manifested in their "attachments to the ethnic collectivity," strong belief in the Bulgarian "national genius," and determination to work for the "realization of the national ideal" (qt. in Koneva 1995, 45). The rhetoric used in this document is very similar to the one utilized in Mikhailovski's discourse. This 'coincidence' tentatively signals that the exaltation of the nation in a highly emotional register was a mobilization strategy exploited by the government and intellectuals alike with the intention to assist the participation of individuals in the building of the nation-state. Clearly, the nation was endorsed as a primordial birthright, which came along with certain privileges and responsibilities. For instance, the above-mentioned memorandum unambiguously declared that all Bulgarian citizens were to acquire common Bulgarian values and adopt the norms of behavior by which the collectivity maintains itself (Koneva 1995, 45).

In this sense, the wars led in the name of the Bulgarian nation's consolidation (1885, 1912-1913, 1918, 1944) posed the greatest trials for state cultural politics. These indisputably proved that modern Bulgarian culture succeeded in affirming the significance of the nation. To put it in Weber's terms, the official Bulgarian culture succeeded in positing "the contents of the nation as an absolute value" by communicating the "irreplaceability of the culture values that are to be preserved and developed only through the cultivation of the peculiarity of the group" (qt. in Jusdanis 2001, 34). Hence, national cultural institutions embraced the modern principle of nationalism. They effectively performed the service of "validating the existence of the nation in the name of its uniqueness" (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 34). In short, these institutions enabled the nationalization of Bulgarian society by promoting the growth of national culture as "the keeper and expression of [people's] distinctiveness" (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 34). This national culture not only was cultivated in the name of the nation's uniqueness but also became a principle method for commanding loyalty from the citizens of the Bulgarian state, a commitment that in turn guaranteed the preservation of the Bulgarian ethnic identity.[11] It is of no surprise then, that the message the official cultural institutions persistently communicated through their activities was the message of nationalism, professing that the Bulgarian nation was superior to its neighbors and therefore, the Bulgarian state and its subjects must preserve its uniqueness (Koneva 1995, 45-46; 48).

This type of nationalism is specific to the modernization projects of aspiring nation-states. Michael Hetcher has defined it as a "state-building nationalism" (2000, 62). In his view, its most conspicuous feature is that the efforts at cultural homogenization result from the growth of direct rule (Hetcher 2000, 62). Such efforts become central to the ambitions of the emerging political elite whose purpose is to assimilate all culturally distinctive individuals by means of their involvement in the exercise of newly promoted national traditions, which often are designed "to impart a sense of national history that might supplant long-held popular attachments to local territories and authorities" (Hetcher 2000, 64). In this sense, the rediscovery of Bulgarian vernacular culture was institutionally encouraged, becoming the principle incentive of the free public education and public culture, for it continued to sustain all claims for Bulgarian cultural uniqueness (Koneva 1995, 30-35; 45-46; 62; 85-145). Its constitution at the core of the newly emerging public culture determined the mode of social engineering of both the state and the intelligentsia (Koneva 1995, 45, 82).

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[11] Koneva discusses the effect of another act of the Bulgarian Ministry of Learning issued on the eve of the first Balkan war (September 17, 1912). According to her, after its release the atmosphere in the capital, Sofia, was charged with militant patriotism for people greeted each other with "Blessed War!" instead of "Good morning!" (1995, 102).

The official cultural agenda of the state clearly supported a cultural identity that was embedded in the matrix of pre-liberation cultural sentiments and identity categories. The purpose of promoting the study of Bulgarian folklore, ethnography, history, and language is apparent inasmuch as these academic fields served as public channels to advocate the urgency of the Bulgarian nation's cultural and political integration. Agitating for the fulfillment of the national ideal, the systematic study of the Bulgarian language, folklore, history, and ethnography thus sanctioned the coincidence of territorial, ethnic-cultural, and political boundaries. Therefore, these disciplines in the post-liberation period developed as the most prestigious and respectful areas of academic research, exceeding in scope and publications the achievements of all other intellectual enterprises (Koneva 1995, 68-69).

Clearly then, the official nationalist doctrine while encouraging the study of Bulgarian traditional culture and lifestyle performed what Smith (1999) has defined as a "vernacular mobilization of the masses." It proceeded from an understanding that vernacular culture, which only then became elevated as the basis of the national public culture, was the source of collective dignity and pride. The scholarly *oeuvre* of Professor Ivan Shishmanov, the founder of Bulgarian folkloristics and ethnography, most powerfully expressed this position. In an article, crucial for the development of Bulgarian cultural anthropology, which outlined the major principles of folkloristic and ethnographic research in Bulgaria, the distinguished post-liberation theorist championed the study of Bulgarian traditional culture as a grounding, identity-securing mechanism to ensure the continuity of Bulgarian national history (Shishmanov 1966, 7-61). Shishmanov was aware of the unfeasibility of preserving the traditional peasant culture under the new conditions. From his perspective, this culture also supplied an "archaic" model of cultural identity that was no longer fit to represent the changes in the Bulgarian mentality. In this article, he made it clear that the study, collection and documentation of ethnographic and folklore materials was vital. According to him, the study of Bulgarian vernacular culture offered insights into the "collective soul" and historical fate that were essential to piloting the nation in its further development. Thus, the crux of Shishmanov's argument was that only a profound knowledge of the Bulgarian ethnic *Weltanschauung*, encoded in the living albeit slowly disappearing traditional peasant culture, would guarantee Bulgaria's successful launch into modernity (1966, 25-31). In this light, the study of Bulgarian folklore and ethnography assisted the establishment of "a single continuous conceptual space" circumscribing the "undivided, primordial" totality of the Bulgarian nation (cf. James 1996, 183). It sustained all political claims for cultural homogeneity and served to justify the expansionist ambitions of the Bulgarian political elites.

Ernest Gellner is the renowned contemporary theorist who insisted that the development of a homogenized high culture is the most notable feature of the nation as a modern social formation (1983, 1997). However, if we agree with Paul James, this concept of cultural integration (i.e., cultural homogeneity) offers a too simplistic, one-dimensional representation of reality. James criticizes Gellner's interpretation by stressing that the notion of homogenized high culture contains inherent contradictions. On the one hand, as he points out, Gellner's theory fails to supply plausible explanation for the need for homogeneity, that is, why the single continuous cultural space of the high national culture emerges in the first place, and what factors assist its formation. Besides, the theorist disagrees that the process of constituting the continuous cultural space is usually one that aims at the creation of a closed and bounded society. As he underscores, the homogenization of culture often presupposes its opening to experimentation and exploration insofar as the development of a high national culture implies freedom of the intellectually trained to challenge and constantly undermine the supremacy of any 'common' version of cultural expression. As a result, the tensions between the various "risings of the cultural" (the high and the low, the traditional and the modern, the cosmopolitan and the local) come to play a significant role in the demarcation and maintenance of national boundaries (James 1996, 140-144).

In his cogent discourse, the post-modernist scholar suggests that a more plausible picture emerges if the 'rise of the cultural' is explored through analysis of the parallel tensions, generated by the changes in the mode of integration. Resulting from the "rapid development of the means and relations of disembodied extension, including the newspaper and [the] telegraph" (James 1996, 180), as he points out,

> These changes in the mode of integration also became part of the transfiguration of the hometown society *and* the uneven consolidation of the nation-state – hence the overlap or coincidence of apparently antithetical subjectivities, from romantic longings for the blood and soil attachment of the village, and commonsense assumptions about the primordiality of the nation, to cosmopolitan desires for a "brotherhood of mankind." Moreover, despite the way in which a dominant level of integration was reconstituting prior forms, it was an uneven process occurring more as the intersection-in-dominance of different forms of integration than the supplanting or complete dissolution of the old. Resistance to the modernizing tidal wave of capitalism and nation-state was common in the late nineteenth century, even if

> paradoxically the act of resistance itself also contributed to the reconstruction of older ways of life (181; author's italics).

At this point, I will discuss the methodological implications of James' critique. They are significant for he offers a flexible and more 'rounded' theoretical approach to the phenomenon of Bulgarian intellectual resistance to the particular forms in which modernization took place in this historical locality. It serves well as a guiding framework for explicating the Bulgarian modernist cultural revolt because it allows for conceptualizing the attempts of Bulgarian modernists as a controversial practice. As I will show later, it entailed tensions, inconsistencies, and differences (but also interpenetration) between "the cosmopolitan, the national, and the 'residual' pockets of parochialism," the high and the low culture, and the realms of the private and the public sphere (cf. James 1996, 184). More importantly, James' conceptual paradigm recognizes that the congruence of the political and the cultural presuppose some continuity of social structures and although the nation is a modern social formation, "it is [also] materially grounded in historically long-run social forms." It continually "recalls 'concrete' images of blood and soil" in order to affirm itself as a "community that extends beyond the boundaries of kinship relations or attachments to a perceptible place" (cf. James 1996, 183).

From what has been said, it is apparent that acknowledging such "ontological contradictions" (cf. James 1996, 183) – intrinsic to the definition of nation – is a tangible theoretical position that accounts for the complexity of the nation as a modern social form. James' theorizations then offer a way to surmount the difficulties posed by the experience of the Bulgarian nation as 'dismembered,' i.e., a nation whose cultural and political boundaries did not coincide. In short, his analytical scheme helps us create alternative interpretative models to investigate cases that mainstream theories of nationalism have only inadequately handled. Now, I will conclude this section with a brief summary of the main points made so far.

Fin-de-siècle Bulgaria was an aspiring national state whose elites undertook the task of state-building with little political experience and without extensive preparation. The liberation from the Ottoman Empire set the clock at point zero, hence marking the beginning of modern Bulgarian history. Although the officially endorsed national myth sustained the legitimacy of the political community as a historical subject with a durable presence in international relations, trumpeting that the third Bulgarian state was the restoration, continuation and further development of Bulgarian statehood. In fact, the Bulgarian nation became a historical subject inscribed in space and time only with the institution of the modern state. The officially promoted version of Bulgarian identity clearly spelled out features that reified the collective solidarity and 'national character' that was rooted firmly in the network of traditional social relations.

Besides, the Bulgarian nation was a politically constituted nation because it became a sovereign political unit as a result of a war. As Schnapper recognizes, the order of the state and the order of the nation are different things (1998). Although the Bulgarian state was an expression of the will of the Bulgarian *ethnie* to be recognized as a modern polity, the political bond that united the citizens was yet to be established. This is why the most pressing task of state building was the creation of the "political domain" as a "site of transcendence of all particularisms by means of citizenship" (cf. Schnapper 1998, 12). This granted, what also needed to be done in order to constitute the community of citizens was the formulation of a governing principle that would integrate the populations included in the political unit, as well as those that were perceived as Bulgarians, but dwelled outside the territorial boundaries of the state. In other words, the invention of the cultural principle that would pre-condition the inclusion of these populations in the Bulgarian state and would provide the basis for the political consolidation was a necessity that justified "the internal and external actions of the state" (cf. Schnapper 1998, 16). Both the political and the cultural unification of the Bulgarians therefore presented key objectives of the state nationalizing agenda.

As many theorists have claimed, the nation as an ideal type of political union is characterized by the coincidence of cultural unit and territorial political organization. As this apparently was not the case with the Bulgarians, the mobilization of the notion of cultural homogeneity was a strategy used by the Bulgarian nationalists in order to gain international recognition for the need to redraw the borders of their country so that the allegedly homogenized cultural entity would reside in its own territory, i.e., the Bulgarian nation-state. As history attests, they were prepared, if necessary, to arouse this homogeneity by aggressive political acts. Since the accoutrements of Bulgarian nationhood were already discovered in the existing vernacular culture, the elites felt that they needed to "[work] to increase the vitality of the nation by reinforcing the cultural homogeneity of populations" for the adopted national-political ideal was "the coincidence between the political unit and the cultural community" (cf. Schnapper 1998, 28).

The Bulgarian post-liberation intelligentsia embarked on this mission with the enthusiasm of a pioneer generation, who had the self-confidence that its visions and actions created the modern political, economic, social, and cultural dimensions of "the new Bulgaria" (Dr. Krŭstev 1978, 12). However, the outcomes of intellectuals' participation in the state-building project are complex and often puzzling, leaving one with the impression that the modernization of Bulgarian society failed somewhat. "The reality of the restricted liberal modernity" (cf. Wagner 1994, 93) that the newly formed nation-state embodied, produced relentless societal anxiety and a lasting sense of crisis. Nonetheless, the fact remains: the Bulgarian Kingdom, regardless of the inconsistencies of its modernization, internal instability, and international isolation, effectively performed its function as a container and safeguard of modernity because it successfully imposed limitations on the experience of social order and nationhood. It introduced new sets of formal rules and power relations through "enabling and constraint" (cf. Wagner 1994, 94), thus setting the boundaries that established the collective agency, i.e., the Bulgarian nation.

4.2. 'Folk Roots' or the Politics of Traditional Bulgarian Identity

Interest in the Bulgarian traditional peasant culture arose in the 19th century under the influence of foreign, predominantly Serbian, Russian, Czech, and Ukrainian scholars and political activists.[12] Particularly influential was the work of Yurii Venelin, who inspired Vasil Aprilov – a famous Bulgarian merchant and respected benefactor of the Bulgarian national-cultural revival in the first half of the 19th century – to start gathering traditional Bulgarian artifacts in order to draw the attention of the Great Powers and Russia to the Bulgarian cause. It is interesting to cite from Venelin's letter sent to Aprilov on September 17, 1837. Here the prominent Russian folklorist wrote:

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[12] The works of the Serb Vuk Karadžič, the Russians Peter Bezsonov and Viktor Grigorovich, the Czech P. J. Šafarik, and the Ukrainians Yurii Venelin and Mykhailo Drahomanov played a key role in the development of Bulgarian folkloristics. A pivotal moment in the familiarization of Western audiences with Bulgarian oral poetry was the publication by Auguste Dozon of a collection of Bulgarian folk songs, entitled *Chansons populaires bulgares inedites*, which appeared in Paris, in 1875.

> Dear Sir,
>
> You are complaining that the Russians have forgotten the Bulgarians. Please, allow me to explain. The educated European nations have not forgotten the Greeks and the Serbs because they, while doing business in Europe, began speaking, writing, and loudly propagating ethnographic evidence about their people. For example, the Serbs have already published four volumes of their folk songs. […] These songs were translated in French, German, and English. Despite the poor translations, the educated European nations are still able to identify and appreciate the Homeric nature of these works. […]
>
> It is true that the Serbs are ignorant people, yet in the eyes of Europe they have acquired the status of an antique culture. Now, regardless of the misfortunes that happen to them, the Europeans who have read Homer's poems do not ignore them because the Serbian folk songs speak on their behalf […].[13]

This letter clearly reveals the purpose served by Bulgarian folklore and ethnography in the pre-liberation period. It demonstrates that such activities played a complementary, albeit very important role in the process of national awakening and nation-formation by ascribing the fundamental vectors of cultural distinctiveness.

Amilcar Cabral has explained the significance of cultural claims in the process of national liberation. He espouses that culture is "the vigorous manifestation of the ideological or idealist plane of the physical and historical reality" of the colonized society, and in this respect, any attempts to "deny the culture of the people in question" provoke a reaction that negates the oppressor culture (Cabral 1994, 63). This specific role of Bulgarian folklore gathering should be underscored for it presents another difference from the Ukrainian case. As a patriotic activity, the collection and study of traditional artifacts, customs, and rituals was clearly executed with the intention to advertise the Bulgarian liberation movement in front of the Great Powers and win their assistance in the accomplishment of Bulgarian people's political freedom. It gave opportunity to the leaders of the liberation movement to learn about their people and to create an inventory of cultural claims that supported the struggle for political liberation (cf. Cabral 1994, 63). In addition, as Cabral maintains, the purpose of any cultural analysis is to give "a measure of the strengths and weaknesses of the people when confronted with the demands of the struggle [for national liberation]" (1994, 63). The recorded folklore materials and ethnographic descriptions presented a form of cultural analysis because they demonstrated the Bulgarian progressive intelligentsia's self-reflective and self-critical discovery of their culture. This process entailed a selection and revision of available categories that were assessed on the basis of their usefulness for the fabrication of the people's reputable national 'image.' In this sense, the Bulgarian liberation movement was "not only a product of culture but also *a determinant of culture*." A clear formulation of the objectives of cultural resistance thus became a compulsory and integral part of the Bulgarian liberation struggle (cf. Cabral 1994, 64).

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[13] Вие се оплаквате, уважаеми господине, че българите са забравени от русите. Позволете да Ви обясня това. Гърците и сърбите не са забравени от просветените европейски народи, защото те самите, търгувайки и служейки из Европа, пишеха, говореха и крещяха с етнографски сведения за себе си. Така например, сърбите вече издадоха четири тома свои народни песни. […]. Тия песни са преведени на френски, немски и английски; макар тия преводи да са слаби, все пак образованите народи не могат да се налюбуват на омировския характер на песните им [...]. При все че сърбите са съвсем необразован народ, преводите на народните им песни накараха цяла Европа да ги смята вече за полу-класически народ. И каквото и нещастие да се случи на сърбите, европейците, които вече са чели Илядата и Одисеята, не ще ги забравят, защото те познават народните песни на тяхната древност. Excerpts of this letter were translated in Bulgarian and published by Todor Shishkov in 1858-1860 (cf. Dinekov 1990).

Regardless of the fact that the collecting of folklore could be considered one of the most explicit manifestations of the growing Bulgarian national consciousness, the study and popularization of folklore materials as an organized collective endeavor in the course of the Bulgarian revival did not produce a widely spread intellectual movement.[14] It was mostly an expression of personal interests and was performed by amateurs, who populated the large Bulgarian émigré colonies of Istanbul, Bolgrad, Odesa, Bucharest, and Vienna.[15] The primary case in point is Liuben Karavelov, who published part of his ethnographic records as *Pamiatniki narodnogo byta bolgar* (Documents of the National Way of Life of the Bulgarians, 1861). His collection was written in Russian and published in Moscow. This fact clearly betrays the Bulgarian intelligentsia's ambition to win the support of the Russian imperial government in promoting the Bulgarian national cause. Karavelov's intellectual efforts show that Bulgarian folklore and ethnographic materials supplied evidence for the richness and longevity of Bulgarian culture, suggesting also that the people who have created it formed a distinct ethnic group whose natural rights ought to be recognized by the international community.

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[14] The earliest extant records of Bulgarian folksongs date back to the 16th century when two texts were found in a handwritten Bulgarian dictionary produced in Kostursko (presently in Macedonia). The collector used the Greek alphabet to record the songs. This isolated case reflects a subjective interest and certainly not a planned and organized activity. It was not until the 19th century that the gathering of Bulgarian folklore actually

During this first stage of the development of Bulgarian folkloristics, romantic ideas were a dominant conceptual model. The ideas of German romantic philosophy and nationalism reached the Bulgarian educated society directly or through the influence of the Austrian Slavs and the Russians (Pundeff 1994, 18). Under these influences, the oral tradition together with the vernacular language, the Orthodox Christian religion, and the history of the Bulgarian state were identified as the bedrocks of Bulgarianness. The 'facts' they provided were used to sustain political claims for practicing Bulgarian self-determination. The search for the 'inner,' primordial sources of Bulgarian ethnic distinctiveness at that time was unproblematic inasmuch as "[…] the striking differences of language, religion, and alphabet, and the pride in their own civilization and heritage set the

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began. The collections that marked the turning point were published by foreigners: Vuk Karadžič's *Narodna Srpska Pesarnitsa* was published in 1815, while Yurii Venelin's book, entitled *Drevnie i nyneshnie bolgary* (1829) was written in Russian (Dinekov 1990, 80-81).

[15] A detailed list of the major first publications of Bulgarian folklore, collected and published by ethnic Bulgarians could be found in Shishmanov 1966, 7-11, notes 1 and 2.

conquerors and the conquered, the *ghaazi* and the *raya*, sharply apart and reinforced the cohesion of each of the antagonistic nationalities" (Pundeff 1994, 11).

In the light of the present discussion, Jason Goodwin's analysis is also worthy of mention. The post-modernist historian suggests that "[t]he most impressive feature of Ottoman rule was its opposition to the thin inadequacies of national identification." In his view,

> The Ottoman system made no national distinctions; and truly there were few to be made with clarity. Language was a very uncertain indication of nationality [...] Nationalism was a pretense, like the construct of the empire which it came to overthrow. As soon as nationhood became the coy, the principles on which each nation based its identity could be cobbled together *ad hoc* from a smorgasbord of history, religion, middle-class notions of propriety, brigand notions of honour, foreign intervention, Ottoman initiation, military advocacy, energetic tyrants, slothful pashas, ambitious professors of philology, greed, despair and ridiculous youthful heroism (1999, 294-295).

Although I, in principle, welcome this interpretation, it seems to me that the problem of the Bulgarian, Greek, Serbian and other Balkan nationalism(s) is not as simple as the American scholar wishes it to be. I tend to espouse the position of the anthropologist Marcus Banks who advises that "the interplay of self-identification and external classification is important in the process of endorsing a national identity" (1996, 132). Moreover, as Banks further acknowledges, this interplay and effort to confer a respectable national image takes place in a taxonomic space that is not neutral. This space renders available, if not acceptable identity categories. In the majority of instances, these seem to be dually constructed through negotiation and interaction between the self-identification (on a personal as well as on a group level) and the 'imprint' of categories (labels) from outside, or as Banks has put it, between "achievement and ascription" (1996, 132).

In this respect, crucial for the articulation of the Bulgarian ethnic identity and mobilization of the masses was the mapping of Bulgarian distinctiveness onto a set of rigidly maintained ethnic boundaries between the Bulgarians, the Greeks, and the Serbs. As a result, all claims of cultural distinctiveness were formulated in contrast to the claims of the Greeks and the Serbs. The rhetorical style used to extol Bulgarianness at that time markedly reflects the antagonistic nature of those comparisons. The three ethnic groups contended in winning the support of the Great Powers for their particular national cause and this rivalry distinctly affected the construction of identity defining descriptors.

Petŭr Dinekov, the prominent Bulgarian folklorist, also has pointed out that the collection and publication of folk songs and other ethnographic documentation in the pre-liberation period was above all an instantaneous reaction against the threat to the integrity of Bulgarian ethnic identity, posed by the colonizing cultural and political aspirations of the neighboring ethnic groups (Greeks and Serbs above all; Dinekov 1990, 87). Also, as previously mentioned, the folkloristic activities of the Bulgarian intellectuals harmonized with their ambition to construct a Bulgarian national image for the Western powers and Russia, in pursuit of international political support for the growing Bulgarian independence movement. For these reasons, the politics of Bulgarian self-identification involved significant exertion of efforts in demonstrating that the Bulgarian people were unfortunate, oppressed and 'forsaken' by the civilized world. In this conceptual framework, the folklore materials were used to certify that Bulgarians were a people possessing a rich and unique as well as a very ancient culture. Thus, a dominant bearing in the political use of the Bulgarian folklore during the period of Bulgarian national revival became the struggle to discredit a widely accepted belief by foreign scholars and collectors that traditional Bulgarian songs were poor, unskilled and expressionless adaptations of Serbian folk epics (Dinekov 1990, 85-86). In short, the 'essentialization' of the vernacular culture, its 'invention' as a common tradition that defined the group's "cultural personality" (cf. Cabral 1994, 56) was a reaction to the negative evaluation and the ascribed international 'labels' that portrayed Bulgarian culture as unoriginal and underdeveloped.

Clearly then, the collecting and publishing of ethnographic data were important, though not the most notable aspects of the Bulgarian intellectuals' patriotic activities. From the second half of the 19th century onward they engaged in explicit revolutionary acts against the Ottoman Empire and Greek and Serbian assimilation politics. Thus, the western and central Bulgarian territories saw the most enthusiastic involvement of intellectuals in the gathering of traditional Bulgarian heritage.[16]

During the period of national revival, Bulgarian folklore turned into a valuable cultural asset because it supplied the 'content' of the secular and most recent expression of Bulgarian ethnicity. The sense of identity endorsed during this period was predicated on the cultural differences between the Turkish colonizers and the colonized Bulgarian speaking population. In a typically romantic fashion, the patriots placed the demographically prevalent peasant 'class' at the core of the nation, identifying the 'people' as a tightly bound, cohesive patriarchal collectivity whose independent institutional existence was abruptly ceased by the Ottoman oppressors. Thus, local vernacular customs and traditions were acclaimed because they legitimated a sense of history that sustained the memory of, and pride in, the achievements of the medieval Bulgarian state. In addition, the traditional lore was still alive at the time and as a result, folklore was strongly associated with the other two key ethnic descriptors of the Bulgarian nation, namely the vernacular language and history. Included within the idea of a sovereign Bulgarian state, these three principles encoded the quintessence of Bulgarianness, which was also defined in comparison to the neighboring Balkan cultures of the Greeks and the Serbs. In this respect, the claims for Bulgarian cultural superiority played major role in the national self-definition, asserting the originality and richness of the Bulgarian vernacular language, culture, and history. Those claims supplied the 'cultural' content of the emerging Bulgarian nationality and contained its distinctiveness.

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[16] This is not surprising considering, that the Western parts were the territories fiercely disputed by the neighboring countries. For this reason, two Bulgarian folklorists, who were born in that area, have been celebrated as passionate Bulgarian patriots. Dimitŭr (1810-1862) and Konstantin (1830-1862) Miladinovi were born in Struga (present-day Macedonia). As legend has it, the Miladinov brothers died in prison, allegedly poisoned by Greek Phanariots because of their agitation for the recognition of a distinctive Bulgarian culture. Their work suggests that in the 1860s the Slavic population in these lands had a Bulgarian national consciousness (Detrez 1997, 217-8). In regards to the central parts, these constituted the core of the modern Bulgarian nation-state.

In its function as the principle marker of cultural uniqueness and container of Bulgarian autochthonous identity, the living oral tradition also played an important role as a resource for the development of modern Bulgarian literature. The evolution of Bulgarian literature as a social institution was an essentially modern phenomenon, because the social imagination of that period vigorously associated Bulgarian *belles-lettres* with the idea of nationality and modernity. For Bulgarian intellectuals, the emergence of a written tradition in the vernacular symbolized the success of the Bulgarian people in upholding their ethnicity under conditions of a detrimental colonial rule. They compared the new literature to Greek and Serbian cultural production, asserting both its uniqueness and significance for the awakening of the Bulgarian national consciousness. The maturation of modern Bulgarian literature as an ethnic written literary tradition confirmed that the Bulgarians were a community of sophisticated and literate people, whose historical progress had been tremendously slowed down by the 'primitive culture' of the invaders. Respectively, both the invented tradition (folklore) and the thriving vernacular culture aided modern Bulgarian literature as resources that bespoke the uniqueness of the Bulgarians, especially in contrast with the conquerors and the neighboring ethnic groups. For this reason, the literary production of that period was endorsed as a building block and expression of national identity. Its significance was measured by its social function of representing the collective experience, and the single evaluative criterion for its merit was its ability to reinforce the national ideal: an independent Bulgarian state (Shishmanov 1966, 59; Manning and Smal-Stockyi 1960, 52-72).

With respect to the relationship of folk poetry and prose to the *belles-lettres* of the Renascence period, Bulgarian scholarship unanimously has recognized the strong and enduring influence of Bulgarian folklore on the emerging written tradition (Dinekov and Lekov 1977). Conventionally, Bulgarian literary scholars view the oral tradition as the foundation of modern Bulgarian literature. The use of folklore in the revolutionary lyrics of Khristo Botev, perhaps the most eminent among the Bulgarian romantic poets, is well studied. The works of less significant romantic and sentimentalist authors who wrote in the 19th century also provide profuse examples. Here I would mention the names of Liuben Karavelov, Georgi Sava Rakovski, Ilia Blŭskov, Naiden Gerov, Raiko Zhinzifov, and Petko Slaveikov (the father of Pencho Slaveikov, one of the first Bulgarian modernists). Folklore stylizations and adaptations proliferate in the writings of Ivan Vazov, the acclaimed patriarch of modern Bulgarian literature, who often retreated to the world of traditional legends and songs in order to find the most suitable representations of the national social ideal and express the most popular official vision of Bulgaria's democratic future.

The claim that folk tradition played the role of a modeling aesthetic system (Dinekov and Lekov 1977, 25-26) is commonplace in Bulgarian literary scholarship. According to the standard interpretative position, Bulgarian folk songs and tales provided not simply the motifs, images and themes of modern Bulgarian poetry and fiction, but most of all affected the very manner of their aesthetic representation. In contrast to medieval Bulgarian literature, folklore texts offered a secular, realistic, and sensual metaphoric description of life events and human emotions that set the foundations upon which modern literary tastes and aesthetic perceptivity further flourished (Dinekov and Lekov 1977, 25-26).

This approach, however, is slightly biased. The relationship between folklore and literature in Bulgarian cultural history is not without problems. If one takes into account, for instance, Botev's own pronouncements and evaluations of Bulgarian folk poetry, the picture is not as clear-cut as it may seem. According to the contemporary Bulgarian folklorist, Albena Khranova, Botev rarely engaged in romantic exaltation of the Bulgarian peasantry (1998). On the contrary, his articles published in *Duma na Bŭlgarskite emigranti* (Word of the Bulgarian Emigrants, 1871) and *Zname* (The Banner, 1874), often carry a negative assessment of Bulgarian folklore as a definitive descriptor of cultural identification (Khranova 1998, 87-88). Khranova's explanation, and I wholeheartedly agree with her, is that such a conflictual attitude and the tensions resulting from Botev's ambivalence arise because of his attempt to overcome the modeling paradigm of traditional aesthetics (i.e., realism) and express not the anonymous, all-inclusive, collective voice but his personal ideology and values

(1998, 88). His lyrical discourses appropriated folkloric items through re-contextualization that intentionally situated the collective 'voice' within a matrix of idiosyncratic experiences. However, Bulgarian criticism has insufficiently addressed the implications of the folklore-literature adversity. By monopolizing the interpretation of lyrics by Botev and other pre-liberation poets as a form of 'folkloric stylization,' mainstream criticism has used it to enhance a patriotic political agenda. During the epoch of Bulgarian national revival and thereafter, particularly during socialist rule, the tensions resulting from the denial of folklore as the modeling paradigm were perceived by definition as a deficiency with dire cultural consequences (denationalization). Works that failed to establish inter-textual or meta-textual relationships with Bulgarian folklore were assessed as insufficiently artistic and incomplete (Khranova 1998, 97-98).

In this respect, the association of folklore and literature as conventionally postulated by the Bulgarian critical imagination was a form of ideological manipulation through which the continuity of Bulgarian culture was established. It was an analytical construct enabling the unproblematic construction of cultural-historical continuity by gluing together multiple layers of cultural history. In my view, the ultimate purpose of this manipulation is clear: while setting up the boundaries of the national semiosphere, it also defined it as a diversified and rich intellectual space, a system of codes that gave rise to various, individual 'languages,' all originating from the same source. In addition, this conceptual paradigm affirmed the centrality of literariness as a more sophisticated and refined yet ideologically dominant mode of artistic communication. In this sense, Khranova is correct in noting that modern Bulgarian literature since its inception took over and appropriated the non-literary modes of expression, subjecting them to ideological distortion that tried to bridge the gaps in what was perceived to be the discontinuous historical development of the Bulgarian written tradition and high culture (1998, 93).

In the post-liberation period, Vazov's critical discourses most clearly exemplify this position for he insistently argued in favor of a realistic Bulgarian national literature, deeply rooted in the oral traditions. In fact, he contended that literary production that was not grounded in the vernacular culture had little to say to the Bulgarian audience and perpetually urged for the preservation of traditional aesthetics as a defining national category (Vazov 1957, 645-646). In his view, modern Bulgarian literature ought to espouse the collective values of the ethnic group. "Only then," wrote the patriarch, "it will be capable of expressing the nation's indigenous character" (1957, 46). Consequently, he advocated that realism based on the "folkloric principles" of artistic representation should be accepted as the method of modern Bulgarian literature (Vazov 1957, 632-633). On such premises, he maintained that the most significant social function of written Bulgarian literature was to express "the feelings, the genius and the originality of the people" (Vazov 1957, 46). As the writer believed, only then would Bulgarian *belles-lettres* secure the perpetuation of the ethnic quintessence (Vazov 1957, 390).

It is clear that Vazov championed a collectivistic interpretation of Bulgarian nationality and his understanding permeated the conceptualization of Bulgarian national literature as an expression of the collective experience, filtered through the traditional Bulgarian *Weltanschauung*. Thus, he saw the emerging written literary tradition as a prime identity-securing mechanism and the leading institution of signification in modern times (Vazov 1957, 46).

Vazov's enunciations are important because they indicate a traditional intellectual approach to the definition of the Bulgarian nation (cf. also Shishmanov 1966, 310-312). Conventionally, the Bulgarian patriotic intelligentsia has sought the essence of group identity in the institutional existence of the *ethnie* as an autonomous political, religious, and cultural collective agency. The first to describe the 'national character' and to articulate the ideal of Bulgarian identity was Paisii Khilendarski. His brief history of Bulgarian statehood (*Slavianobŭlgarska istoriia*, 1762) proposed that the source of Bulgarian identity rested within the ethnic group as a whole, therefore endorsing a sense of group belonging that became a form of mandatory public behavior. To Father Paisii, the national identity was something that had been lost and that needed to be revived and regained by the community as a whole. His discourse celebrated Bulgarianness as a permanent collective condition, embodied in the ethnic group's past and vernacular culture and he ardently invited his compatriots to recognize the supremacy of the bonds that tied them to the national community: "Oh thou foolish and degenerate man, why art thou ashamed to call thyself a Bulgarian? Have not the Bulgarians had a Kingdom and Empire of their own? Why shouldest, thou, O imprudent man, be ashamed of thy nation and shouldest labor in a foreign tongue?" (qt. in Manning and Smal-Stockyi 1960, 51).[17] Thus, the monk from Khilendar exalted Bulgarian nationhood as a social commitment to the ethnic group and willingness to sacrifice one's life in a way that no other group or association commanded. To him, nationality was not a matter of personal choice but an exigency that stemmed from one's embeddedness in a given historical and genealogical community. He failed to see it as an immediate personal experience, therefore, insisting on the irreplaceability of the taken-for-granted concrete collectivity as a source of dignity and status.

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[17] The modernized version of Paisii's history is available on-line from Bŭlgarska virtualna biblioteka *Slovoto* (1999-2003): http://slovoto.orbitel.bg. Cf. *Predislovie kŭm oniia koito zhelaiat da prochetat i chuiat napisanoto v taia istoriia.*

Father Paisii's model of national identification built upon three main principles, thereafter consistently reified in the nationalizing discourses of the more conservatively oriented representatives of the Bulgarian intelligentsia. The glorification of the past and the definition of Bulgarian identity, exclusively in terms of retrospective association with the institutions of the medieval Bulgarian state and church, nourished this version of national identification. The maintenance of firm ethnic boundaries with the Greeks, the Serbs and the Turks, also aided the articulation of the essential principles of Bulgarian nationality. Thus, Paisii's and subsequent formulations accentuated the 'primordial' quality of the *ethnie*, asserting that the Bulgarians were a people with a long history of institutional existence thus giving prominence to the political rather than the cultural element in national self-determination. According to this conservative and somewhat limited vision, the continuity of political tradition presented the most powerful argument in support of Bulgarian nationhood.

Bulgarian political elites adopted this model because it emphasized the natural and primeval character of the modern Bulgarian polity. They saw it as an opportunity to agitate for an armed resolution of the national question, simultaneously enhancing the internalization of a social identity that cherished the authority of the state. As one Bulgarian critic points out, all representations of traditional communal existence and material life, together with the vernacular language and culture, were interpreted as reflections of the *ethnie*'s glorious and dignified past, and used in the present to clearly institute the Bulgarians as a distinctive political nation (Elenkov 1994, 11).

Indeed, Paisii's history extolled a number of 'typical' Bulgarian qualities, which later came to be associated with the 'autochthonous ethnic character,' namely "tolerance," "friendliness," "simplicity," "veneration of authority," and so on. These traits were consistently attributed to the 'People,' a notion that for the post-liberation political elites identified the peasant population of Bulgaria, and therefore, were affirmed as the roots of Bulgarian national identity. Additionally elaborated by later generations of intellectuals, these served as a repository of nationalizing 'stereotypes' used to excite and mobilize the masses to partake in the nation-building process. Paisii, for example, claimed that unlike the Greeks, who were "refined" but "perfidious," Bulgarians were "plain" but "good-natured" (Colombo and Roussanoff 1976, 61-62). His style of romantic adulation featured the 'uncultured peasantry' as the bearer of high morality and love for freedom, yet a people who were committed to upholding their collective well-being. Paisii's history demonstrated that the Bulgarian people knew and respected the power of higher authority and, if needed, the people were ready to sacrifice their lives for the collective interests symbolized by the King and the state.

It is no wonder that the official version of national identity relied on this model. Apparently, it instilled qualities and values that rendered Bulgarian citizens obedient and governable subjects, who highly esteemed the authority vested in the ruling administration and the head of the state. In addition, Paisii's version of national identity vigorously declared the Bulgarian people's superiority in comparison with the 'hostile' Greeks and Serbs. Therefore, it supplied a psychologically beneficial model for identification, which emphasized the rights of Bulgarians to be united and thus, justified the expansionist political ambitions of the elites.

The conservative version of national identity also found a particularly strong reification in the writings of the realist and populist writers whereby it offered an image, though nostalgically charged, of the undivided and harmonious, ideal existence of the *ethnos*. Here this model was supported, and became an expression of an ideological position that obsessively opposed modernization. The conservative ideal of nation motivated the reaction of the older generations of the Bulgarian intelligentsia, whose representatives believed that any 'modification' and adjustment would be harmful to group identity. It entrenched an exclusively collectivistic reading of the nation that, unlike the official version of Bulgarianness, sought the source of group identity in the everyday, mundane life of the peasant. The idealization of the past in this context motivated an absurd rationale that called for the revival of the 'traditional' societal and economic institutions. According to this view, preserving the patriarchal ideology, mental structures, and networks of social relations opened the possibility of perpetuating the group's originality in the modern era.

In the view of some contemporary Bulgarian scholars, this exclusively collectivistic reading of Bulgarian identity originated in the pre-liberation period as a cultural reaction to colonial oppression. It was inspired by the loss of the Bulgarian state, which left the Bulgarian people 'in the dark,' for centuries isolated from the mainstream European developments. Elenkov, for example, argues that concepts such as "traditional society," "patriarchal society," "traditional culture" and "folk culture" in the early 1900s communicated the idea of "statelessness," and were used in the ethnographic and historical writings of the period as synonyms, clearly connoting the nation's insipid and shameful existence on the margins of Europe. As he writes:

> At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, Bulgarian society [came to pass an interesting point]: it was as if two different layers of culture

> simultaneously co-existed and people from different historical epochs all lived together. In this consisted [the source of struggle and tensions] that encroached upon the process of national self-definition and impelled the search for a new identity to meet modern-day expectations of the nation's future.[18]

The Bulgarian scholar explains that the image of a patriarchal or traditional culture, described in the ethnographic literature and the populist-realist *belles-lettres*, implied hermetically confined and limited existence within the ethnic group, which in itself was regarded an eternal, natural and self-contained formation (Elenkov 1994, 17-18). This model of traditional society required each person to be tightly associated with the community, which in its totality sanctioned and validated individual existence by strict regulation of the norms of public conduct. In traditional Bulgarian society, domination was enforced and sustained through interpersonal relations that emphasized the 'binding' of individual and group by imposing blood and friendship relations as primary principles of social communication. "There was no individual truth and there was hardly a personal life," writes the scholar, for the events of private significance (birth, death, personal success, and so on) were considered "an important aspect of collective welfare," and hence, subjected to a complex ritualistic legitimization through the system of customary seasonal celebrations (Elenkov 1994, 7).

The populists and the realists thus defined Bulgarian national identity along the lines of idealized bonds between the individual and the community. In their writings, the older generations of Bulgarian intellectuals stressed above all those ties that made a person part of traditional basic structures (i.e., the patriarchal family, the village, the Orthodox diocese, etc.).[19] They focused on showing the Bulgarian experience as something harmonious, primordial, and larger than the individual who was merely an insignificant building block in the collective formation. Such a collectivist approach fed on the nostalgia for the past and the romanticized accessories of former cultural identification – the ethnographic tokens of traditional peasant culture such as the village square [*megdan*], the pub [*krŭchma*], bagpipes [*gaidi*], moccasins [*tsŭrvuli*], and so on (Elenkov 1994, 18).

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[18] Дори в края на XIX и началото на XX век се получава интересната ситуация, че може да бъде видяно в българското общество сякаш едновременно пребиваване на различни етажи в културата, сякаш съвместен живот на хора от различни векове. Това е и едно от обясненията за напрегнатото дирене на ключа, разкриващ културната идентичност оттогава като необходима опора за нова идентичност, отговаряща на хоризонта на очаквания пред българското бъдеще (Elenkov 1994, 6).

In agreement with Elenkov, I here espouse that the populist fiction and paintings (the so-called artistic trend of *bitopizm*) were "an aesthetization of the traditional society and an aspect of [a] general ideological model of resistance to the changes, which the Bulgarian society endured at the turn of the century" (1994, 19). The manifestations of this culture-specific complex were not limited to expressions in modern Bulgarian literature and the arts, but proliferated in various spheres of Bulgarian public life as well (Elenkov 1994, 18; Elenkov 1998, 13-31).

In this semiotic framework, the 'rise of the social,' a category that "came to be associated with all the qualities of the family, but applied to relations obtaining between men in the public sphere" supported the conservative vision of Bulgarian nationality, which attempted to "domesticate" political relations. Regardless of the variations in its articulation, it aspired to establish the public sphere as "a super-family [whereas] politics [turned into] a gigantic, nation-wide administration of house-keeping" (cf. Ringmar 1998). What is 'wrong' with this picture, as Ringmar contends, is that such a notion of political community was still largely based on "blood and kinship" allegiances that could tolerate "no foreign contamination, no impurities or mixes" (Ardent, qt. in Ringmar 1998). Respectively, it could not accommodate the need for acknowledging the unique qualities of the individual, which in its own terms was one of the major pledges to allegiance that made the modern nation-state thrive (cf. Schnapper 1998, 26-27). The threat, therefore, was that a modern society built upon this conceptualization of political community failed to substantiate a politics "based on the intimacy of citizens" that was less prejudiced, and less exclusionary than that based on "the intimacy of the national family or the national body" (cf. Ringmar 1998).

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[19] The works of Mikhalaki Georgiev, Todor Vlaikov, Tsani Ginchev, and other populist writers are typical in this regard. In their fiction, such populist-realist writers represented the Bulgarian experience as an almost intact, idyllic perpetuation of the self-sufficient, ubiquitous life cycle, encompassing both individual and communal existence.

Be that as it may, traditional culture indeed became an essential part of the modern Bulgarian consciousness. In a sense, it provided a point of departure for post-liberation Bulgarian intellectuals who, although acknowledging its strong formative influence, could no longer embrace it wholeheartedly and gullibly accept the identity it embodied. Similar to the Ukrainian case, the essentialization of the Bulgarian vernacular culture signaled the moment in which the Bulgarian intelligentsia became conscious of its own cultural history. From this point on, vernacular culture (traditional society) established the 'roots' of national identity, and while assiduously revised and reinterpreted, it continued to inform all successive efforts for national self-definition and identity construction.

As Elenkov suggests, "the feeling that traditional Bulgarian society is falling apart, and that European civilization [i.e., modernization] inescapably, though slowly, progresses through the Bulgarian lands, constitute two poles of anxiety in the search for national identity in the early 1900s" (Elenkov 1994, 14). At that time, as already noted, the model of national identification outlined by Paisii was the most popular, flowing into the officially adopted version of Bulgarianness, upon which Bulgarian public culture emerged.

In the light of the present discussion, it is important to mention another aspect in the traditional model of Bulgarian self-representation. As it was originally formulated in the nationalizing discourses of the Bulgarian revolutionary intelligentsia, the concept of Bulgarianness embraced a significant dose of shame and embarrassment, triggered by the perceived 'absences' or deficiencies in cultural development. Thus, Bulgarian intellectuals adopted Hegel's model and began defining the nation in negative terms. This negative definition of nation became a structural feature of the Bulgarian post-liberation social imagination.

Aleksandŭr K'osev has explored in detail the implications of this negative self-perception, identifying it as an attempt at "self-colonialization" (1999).[20] According to the contemporary Bulgarian critic,

> [...] in the genealogical knot of Bulgarian national culture there exists the morbid consciousness of an absence – a total, structural, non-empirical absence. *The Others – i.e., the neighbors, Europe, the civilized World, etc. possess all that we lack; they are all that we are not.* The identity of this culture is initially marked, and even constituted by the pain, the shame – and to formulate it more generally – by the *trauma* of this global absence. The origin of this culture arises as a painful presence of absences and its history could be narrated, in short, as centuries-old efforts to make up for and eliminate the traumatic lacks (K'osev 1999; author's italics).

His observation calls to mind Brubaker's statement that nationalizing discourses of aspiring states are predicated on what is perceived as anomalous and pathological condition of expressing the nation (cf. 1996, 79). As K'osev points out, the first implication of such rueful self-stereotyping is that the nationalist ideal materializes as efforts to 'revive' rather than 'inaugurate' the nation and in this respect, the intellectual articulation of the Bulgarian nation is no exception in what Brubaker has defined as "nationalizing" nationalisms (1999). Another ramification that K'osev discusses, which in the context of Bulgarian history had a more significant impact, was the internalization of the collectively felt 'inferiority' in relation to the modern world and particularly, in relation to Europe. The ambivalent constitution of Europe as the 'center' and the significant *Other*, similarly to the Ukrainian case, produced a series of negative introspective stereotypes that portrayed the Bulgarians as inferior, uncouth, and uncultured 'People.' In Bulgaria, the sublime embodiment of this internalized inferiority is the character of Bai Gan'o, created by Aleko Konstantinov in 1895.

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[20] An expanded, carbon version of this text in Bulgarian is published in a collection of scholarly articles entitled *Bŭlgarskiat kanon? Krizata na literaturnoto ni nasledstvo*, edited by A. K'osev (Sofia: "Aleksandŭr Panov," 1998) 5-49.

Originally, this character appeared as a secondary fictional figure in the travel memoirs recounting Aleko Konstantinov's visit to the International Exposition in Chicago (1894). Bai Gan'o is the central character of a separate prose work, entitled *Bai Gan'o. Neveroiatni razkazi za edin sŭvremenen bŭlgarin* (Bai Gan'o. Extraordinary Tales About a Contemporary Bulgarian), which Konstantinov published in 1895. This original assemblage of loosely connected short stories tells of Bai Gan'o's various adventures in Europe and his political career in post-liberation Bulgaria. The piece presents an interesting genre form, an explicitly critical narrative that intentionally undermined the officially promoted version(s) of Bulgarian national identity. Since then, Bai Gan'o has been discursively appropriated both in critical and fictional discourses, constantly re-invented and re-affirmed as the supreme negative archetype, the ultimate source of collective embarrassment and shame. Konstantinov's fictional persona is used in social interactions even today as a cultural icon that demonstrates the 'belated' and aberrant development of the Bulgarian nation. It is evoked in contexts where interaction emphasizes the discomforting, confusing, and generally, humiliating experience of the Bulgarian nationality. Simultaneously, Bai Gan'o is a culturally specific symbol that is often used to affirm the highly localized specificity of the Bulgarian experience, thus evoking a deep sense of cultural intimacy (cf. Herzfed 1997). In this light, he seems to be used as a cultural symbol, mobilized mostly in "potentially threatening contexts" whereby "the familiar social experiences" must be projected onto unknown and challenging social environments (cf. Herzfeld 1997, 7).

In addition to creating a "common ground with the encompassing society," enhancing the bond and sense of belonging to the nation, the self-abasing introspective stereotypes such as Bai Gan'o delineate a discursive "secret space" free from the nationalizing "sometimes suffocating formal ideology of the state" thereby allowing the experience of nationality through "often disruptive popular practices" whose existence the state, tries to suppress (cf. Herzfeld 1997, 5). In this manner, the tension between the official cultural logic of the nation-state and the lived historical experiences of the Bulgarian nationality enabled the construction of another structural opposition to assist the intellectual articulation of the nation. The ambivalent emotional experience of Bulgarianness as a simultaneously empowering and humiliating condition, encoded in Father Paisii's history, "suggests the possibility of subtle recasting(s) of the official discourses" that provoked the "rethinking of the multiple pasts" and engendered "the counter-invention(s) of tradition" (cf. Herzfeld 1997, 12). In the Bulgarian context, two main structural gaps determined the orientations of the modernist revolt. On the one hand, there was "the civil discontent in the validation of the nation-state as the central legitimizing authority" (cf. Herzfeld 1997, 2) in the life of the individual. This discontent provoked the modernist formulation of Bulgarian identity in opposition to the official versions of cultural identity and resulted in "disemia"[21] that supported the binary split between the 'state' and the 'People.' On the other hand, the Modernists' deeply ingrained 'alienation from the people' generated another discursive dichotomy, one signifying the split between the 'elite' and the 'ordinary' people. On these premises, the modernists pushed forward claims for power and participation in the nation-building, "[engaging] in the strategy of essentialism" (cf. Herzfeld 1997, 31). Although they drew on the common repository of 'shared' positive and negative symbols and self-designations, their nationalizing quests suggest different interpretation and are beset by different interests, anxieties, and expectations.

In this sense, the Bulgarian case conforms to the inherently controversial and contradictory formulation of nationality that characterizes the process of modernization and nationalization of 'peripheral' societies. The following chapter will look more closely at the identity politics of the Bulgarian modernists, exploring the modernizing initiatives related to it that pursued a radical transformation of the established social order.

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[21] Herzfeld's broad definition of *disemia* identifies it as "the formal or coded tension between official self-presentation and what goes on in the privacy of collective introspection" (1997, 14).

5. THE MODERNIST CULTURAL REVOLT: CONSTRUCTING NATIONAL HIGH CULTURE

5.1. The Social Imagination in Transition: The Old and the New Bulgarian Intelligentsia

Transforming the social imagination and the manner in which Bulgarianness would be typically conceptualized proved a painful and very laborious process. Time and again, the Bulgarian progressive intelligentsia experienced the changes as a period of deep spiritual and moral crisis, struggling to accept its own historical fate, each time going back to its roots, eager to surmount the pressures of its past and present. For example, in his article "*Bŭlgarskata inteligentsia*" (Bulgarian Intelligentsia), Dr. Krŭstev clearly expressed the anxiety resulting from what he viewed as a scarcity of patriotic zeal and national enthusiasm during the period of building the new Bulgaria. He characterized his contemporary society and fellow citizens in the following manner:

> […] Our patriotic idealism vanished. Crude materialism and egotistic concerns with securing a 'respected position' set in instead. In the life of our nation apathy reigned for the times were charged with a sense of crisis (*kriza*) similar to that experienced by a man whose dreams had come true or had already lost any appeal to him […]. On the other hand, even though the new generation [of intellectuals] was incapable of creating new ideals, it succeeded in preserving respect for their elders. In spite of all partisan wars, governmental mistakes and wanderings in the dark, failures and malfunctions, this generation did not betray patriotic ideals but daringly and firmly defended national interests (*narodni interesi*) whenever it thought the fatherland (*otechestvo*) was in danger.[1]

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[1] […] Патриотическият ентусиазъм отлетя и се замени с трезвото и "разумното" вардене на доброто име, на спечеления почит, на грубия интерес. В живота на народа настъпваше епоха, много сходна с оная епоха, с оная криза, която преживява всеки индивидуум, когато бляновете му станат действителност или изгубят някогашното си очарование. […] Но и ако да не беше способна да създаде нови идеали, новата интелигенция съумя дълго време да запази в своята памет светостта на старите всенародни идеали и въпреки всичките партизански кипежи, въпреки всичките държавни лутания и неразбирщини, тя не само не извърши

Psychologically speaking, this frustration was experienced as a discrepancy between the imagined harmonious and complete national existence and the reality of the 'dismembered,' incomplete nation. As Dr. Krŭstev acknowledged, the major source of distress for the Bulgarian national intelligentsia was the shortage of patriotic ideals that could sustain the struggle for unification indefinitely (1898, 92). He claimed that the older generations of Bulgarian intelligentsia tempered their patriotic passion, giving in to more materialistic concerns and goals (Dr. Krŭstev 1898, 93). "[In the post-liberation period]," he lamented, "the cruelty of the state authorities" (*brutalnostta na sredstvata, s koito si sluzheshe dŭrzhavata*) drove away from political participation all true patriots, namely people who refused to compromise the purity and integrity of the national ideal. "To commence a movement of the same proportion and colossal enthusiasm" (*da se dostigne podobno vŭzbuzhdane, podoben entusiazŭm*) as the pre-liberation revolutionary movement, in his view, was impossible (Dr. Krŭstev 1898, 93).

In this context, as the contemporary Bulgarian scholar Aleksandŭr Iordanov (1993) points out, the ideas of West European Modernism, especially the Symbolist musings on beauty, truth and harmony, fascinated the Bulgarian creative intelligentsia because they strongly resonated with a common appeal for the resurrection and reconstitution of Bulgarianness, which the majority of the intelligentsia at the time felt was urgently needed. Informative, in this respect are Teodor Traianov's reminiscences regarding the launching of the first symbolist journal in Bulgaria, *Hiperion* (1922-1931). The prominent Bulgarian poet, one of the earliest and most devoted followers of West European modernism, admitted in an interview with Atanas Dushkov that the reason for introducing the journal and forming the literary society of Bulgarian symbolists, was the depression and the

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никаква измяна спрямо народните интереси, но и съумя да бъде храбра и решителна в минути, когато мислеше отечеството в опастност. (Dr. Krŭstev 1898, 92-93; page citations refer to the reprint in Elenkov and Daskalov 1994, 91-97).

sense of spiritual crisis overwhelming his contemporaries as a result of the Bulgarian defeat in the First World War. According to Traianov, the devaluation of the national ideal was the main reason motivating him and like-minded intellectuals to face this predicament. As he confessed, "The Bulgarian intelligent felt ashamed to call himself or herself a Bulgarian. The artistic intelligentsia, the producers of Bulgarian national culture, forgot the true meaning of the word 'fatherland,' for in their eyes, it seemed an unattainable chimera."[2] The modernist poet remarked that the journal was conceived with the intention to bolster Bulgarian national consciousness and to offer "positive ideas and ideals" without explicitly promoting political solutions. To put it in Traianov's words, the Bulgarian modernists made every effort "to grasp Beauty and the eternal forms of the Bulgarian spirit." To cries for social justice, they responded with "pushing forward the national and ethnic issues." The symbolists endorsed universalism instead of cosmopolitanism in order to breathe life into the Bulgarian nation and to promote Bulgarian nationalism because "[they] believed that only faithful nationalism is 'the path' leading to universalism."[3]

The perception of spiritual crisis and moral regression was pervasive in the self-definition of Bulgarian modernists and marked their style of social imagining, influencing also their visions for the nation's economic, political, and cultural progress. In their discourses, the nation was persistently constituted as an 'object' needing urgent regeneration. The West European oriented Bulgarian intellectuals – contrary to the official politics of nationhood – felt that the most pressing task was to turn the political unit into a cultured and civic nation. Hence, they insisted that their duty was to make the political and the cultural congruent by spelling out an authoritative cultural concept of Bulgarian nationality. The modernists rejected the ethnic model that supported the efforts for political liberation during the renascence period. They denounced the conventionalized national symbols of identification established in the course of the struggle for political independence because they saw these as already outdated. Their revolt aimed at discarding the inherited formulas of patriotic exaltation as tokens conducive of national sentiments because they evaluated them as a vain and insufficient source of national pride. Their bottom line, as I will try to show later, was the proposition that the state failed to elaborate a unifying cultural agenda, which categorically affirmed Bulgarian cultural distinctiveness, i.e., the singularity of the nation. Thus, the Bulgarian modernists saw a lack of national ideology and rushed to fill in the gap.

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[2] Издаването на "Хиперион" и основаването на литературната задруга започна през 1922 г., когато духовното падение под напора на отрицателните сили бе взело катастрофални размери. Нашият интелигент почти се срамуваше да се казва българин, а за поколението, което божем твореше култура, понятието "отечество" беше някаква химера (Traianov 1935, 94; page citations refer to the reprint in Iliev 1992, 91-95).

[3] Красотата и вечните форми на българския дух бяха благородните усилия на всички нас. Освен това, на виковете за социални проблеми, ние противопоставихме националните и народностните задачи. Вместо към космополитизъм, ние се стремяхме към универсализъм. Само чрез пълното изживяване на индивидуализма можеше да се стигне до българска общност, до българския национализъм. [...] За нас беше непоклатима истина, че само чрез кристалния национализъм може да се стигне до универсализъм (Traianov 1935, 94 and note 341).

This is significantly different from Ukrainian nationalism. For the Bulgarian intelligentsia the formulation of cultural claims became more prominent after the constitution of the political nation, rather than before that. In other words, the "[politicization] of the cultural concept of nationality" (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 72) justified the creation of a national culture that offered "a site for agency enabling a people to posit itself as a special community worthy of [the attained] sovereignty" (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 69). Professor Liubomir Miletich, the eminent Bulgarian linguist, in a letter to Konstantin Irechek appropriately summarized this key intellectual incentive when stating that until the national question was resolved, Bulgarian cultural life would be anomalous, always suffering from stagnation and irreversible decline (qt. in Koneva 1995, 23; cf. also Mikhailovski 1924).

It should be noted that, similarly to the Ukrainian movement, Bulgarian Modernism was a polyphonic phenomenon that, for the period of its development (1890-1930), encompassed a variety of aesthetic positions and styles. Its chronology, therefore, is no less problematic than the periodization of Ukrainian Modernism. The reason, as some scholars have pointed out, could be the scarcity of theoretical manifestos and treatises left by Bulgarian modernist writers. Theoretical reflections on the poetics of Bulgarian Modernism were rare as poets and critics showed little interest in "philosophical speculations" (Kirova, n. d.). Ambiguity and critical indeterminacy regarding the use of western commonplace designators such as impressionism, expressionism, symbolism, and so on, additionally muddle the picture, leading contemporary researchers to seek new definitions and approaches. As Liliia Kirova emphasizes, "regardless of the terms and phraseology we employ" in order to describe the dynamics of the modernist processes in Southeastern Europe, "we should not forget that the distinctive reactions of the Balkan intelligentsia to the established [West European] canons, their particular relationships with the [local] cultural traditions, require more differentiated approaches" (n. d.).

However, some relatively stable timeframes could be set. The work of the literary circle *Misŭl* (Thought, 1892-1907) thus represents the first stage in the development of Bulgarian Modernism. The authors connected with this circle engaged primarily with the popularization of Nietzschean philosophy and the ideals of individualism. Similar to the Ukrainian modernists, the first Bulgarian modernists were concerned with the moral, philosophical, and aesthetic invigoration of Bulgarian nationality. Together with the symbolists, who gained power and prestige in the period immediately preceding the World War I, they shared a passion for moral innovation, aspiring to define Bulgarian nationality as a moral and spiritual principle that could sustain their efforts for discovering and expressing the timeless and harmonious Bulgarian essence.

On the other hand, the heated campaign against Bulgarian symbolism marked in the 1920s the 'arrival' of late modernism, which developed under the influences of German expressionism, Russian and French Dadaism and Surrealism (Igov 1990, 261). Thus, in post-World War I Bulgaria, Geo Milev's journals *Vezni* (Scales, 1919-1922) and *Plamŭk* (Flame, 1924-1925) launched a different type of aesthetic, one that sought to express the political disillusionment and patriotic anxieties of the post-war generation. To the same period belongs also the work of the literary society *Strelets* (Shooter, 1926-1927), which included intellectuals, who were deeply concerned with discovering the unique modern Bulgarian style. Speaking strictly in literary terms, the change indicating the late modernists' orientation took place as many of the prominent Bulgarian symbolist writers and critics stopped publishing in *Hiperion*, the literary organ of the Bulgarian symbolists, and after 1925 withdrew altogether from the movement (Kirova, n. d.). Thus, the crisis of Bulgarian symbolism in the aftermath of World War I signaled a turning point in the evolution of Bulgarian Modernism, simultaneously becoming a sign of a distinctive semantic shift that resulted in a slightly different conceptualization of the Bulgarian nation. Having stated this beforehand, I will also point out that both the early and the late Bulgarian modernists experienced the need for opposing state political nationalism. As mentioned previously, in their view, state cultural and political approaches ineffectively sought a resolution of the thorny Bulgarian national question. This was one of the few common ideological dispositions that held the Bulgarian modernists together and identified their independent position within the Bulgarian *fin-de-siècle* political space. In addition, it should be noted that Bulgarian modernists, regardless of their diverse political affiliations – ranging from quasi-fascist (Stoian Mikhailovski, Kiril Krŭstev, and others) to socialist and social-democratic views (Peio Iavorov, Geo Milev) – in principle did not associate with the proletarian or far leftist ideologies and political parties. As Iordanov remarks, the majority of Bulgarian modernist artists and critics preferred the moderate ideals of Bulgarian liberal democrats and supported, directly or indirectly, the Democratic party (*Demokraticheska partiia*), which Petko Karavelov founded in 1896 (1993, 43).[4]

5.2. Bulgarian Modernist Intelligentsia: A Psychological Profile

Partly, the modernist aspirations and constant dissatisfaction with state political nationalism could be attributed to the peculiar formation of the Bulgarian post-liberation intelligentsia and its specific psychological profile (Genchev 1991). The new generation of Bulgarian intellectuals, much in accord with their Ukrainian 'brothers-in-arms,' were eager to establish themselves as the leading political and cultural elite of a country that they perceived as a 'backwater' of Europe. In addition, as Meininger asserts, it was a nationalist intelligentsia that was formed under peculiar and somewhat complicated circumstances, being "present at its own making." According to this American scholar, "as its eventual members passed through their childhood and their schooling [a secular scientific, economic, and humanitarian knowledge, initially obtained in Greek, Russian, or other foreign languages], they acquired not only the education which made them an elite in their society, but also a sense of mission, a desire to lead their people toward a modern and independent national life" (1987, 393). A number of historians share similar views, noting that the Bulgarian intelligentsia was created as a distinctive social group during the period of national revival (18th and 19th century; Genchev 1977, 1979, 1987, Markovski n. d., Pundeff 1994).

The initial stage of the formation of the Bulgarian patriotic intelligentsia (late 1700-1850) was the result of a complex social-economic dynamics that propelled changes in the dominating colonial power, the Ottoman Empire. The development of a Bulgarian ethnic consciousness and later, national identity, had its foundation in the political and most of all, economic reforms that the colonial administration undertook in the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century (Genchev 1979, 1987, Markovski n. d., Meininger 1987). The changes resulted from the pressures exercised by Western Europe on the Ottoman administration to 'open' its market to the flow of Western commerce and manufacture. This, in practice was a demand for the declining Empire to come to terms with modern technological progress, business relations and, to a certain extent, the progressive ideas of liberal democracy. Thus, a number of legislative acts, issued at the beginning of the 19th century by Sultan Mahmut II document the efforts of the Porte to 'Westernize' the domain.[5] Such changes created for the Bulgarians, as well as all other Balkan people, auspicious conditions to pursue their own political interests. During this first period of the Bulgarian national revival, the quest for cultural determination manifested itself in the struggle for an independent Bulgarian Church (1830-1872) and Bulgarian education (Genchev 1977; Detrez 1997, 126-127; Markovski n. d.). The church question was a culmination of Bulgarian efforts in self-determination prior to the appearance on the scene of revolutionary Bulgarian nationalism in the second half of the 19th century (Genchev 1977; Detrez 1997, 92-93). The Crimean war of 1853-1856 and its aftermath marked the next step in the awakening of the Bulgarian national consciousness, signaling the "emergence of [the revolutionary] Bulgarian nationalism" (Meininger 1987, 3). The struggle for liberation from this moment onward became the most prominent expression of the processes of Bulgarian nation formation. Officially, it concluded with the creation of the Bulgarian national state after the Russian-Turkish war in 1877-1878.

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[4] A brief, but informative overview of the development and various transformation of the Democratic Party can be found in Detrez 1997, 108.

In short, it was in the course of the late 19th century that Bulgarian intellectuals gradually become aware of "[their] own growing vigor and size" as a social group and their common interest in leading the Bulgarian people (Meininger 1987, 3). By the end of the century, they emerged as a major political force to claim leadership rights as the cultural and political elite of the newly formed state. More importantly, however, they formed the first generation of local intelligentsia to partake in the building of the nation-state by participating and heading its political, juridical, and cultural institutions.

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[5] A brief but helpful summary of these changes can be found in Goodwin 1999, 301-320.

The majority of Bulgarian intellectuals dominating the post-liberation cultural and political life were people educated and formed during the times of the revolutionary struggle for independence (Genchev 1991, 274-278). These intellectuals were predominantly male and primarily of middle-class origin, therefore middle class values and virtues remained a strong element of their outlook and self-perception. Moreover, as Meininger has correctly observed, regardless of the modern orientation and desire to break free from their origins, consecutive generations of Bulgarian intellectuals never succeeded in completely disengaging from the system of middle-class materialist values and success ethics, in which "they mirrored their origins more than they supposed" (1987, 179). In fact, their family and educational background formed them, as Meininger writes, into "[…] a more idealistic, a more activist, and a more presumptuous intelligentsia" than their predecessors, thus creating significant obstacles for the pursuit of their leadership ambitions (1987, 119).

Unlike the early revivalists, the intellectuals of the late 19th and early 20th century "earnestly wanted to believe in the rightness of their own images, wanted to believe that the world they invented was the world of reality" (Meininger 1987, 394). They pursued higher goals and vigorously defended the modern life and mentality, yet they had a difficult time translating these ideals into a common ideology. As historical reality proved, the straightforward enthusiasm and devotion to the national ideal were insufficient to ensure the transformation and modernization of Bulgarian society for, as Meininger recognizes, the attempts of the Bulgarian intellectuals to "bring a people so long in slumber to a readiness for progress along Western lines" were doomed to fail (1987, 396).

For example, Dr. Krŭstev's (1898) and Pencho Slaveikov's (1906) critical accounts clearly bespoke some of the most specific tensions and antipathies that defined Bulgarian society at the onset of the 20th century.[6] In my view, the most apparent discordance seems to be between the demands of modernization and the capabilities of Bulgarian intellectuals, who then had the positions and power to undertake the modernizing offensives. In its majority, the elites consisted of representatives of the revivalist generation who were "born and educated under different historical circumstances" (Genchev 1991, 285). In principle, they unwillingly supported any radical transformation of the traditional Bulgarian society, which, as the modernist poet Iavorov avowed, in their eyes appeared as "a moderate, familiar and thus, [acceptable] 'hard and fast' reality" (1907, 66).[7] Therefore, the most pressing imperative, which was the creation of new groups of intellectuals who had the preparation and willingness to enforce the necessary structural and mental changes in order to push Bulgarians forward onto 'the path of progress,' in itself, constituted a major source of societal dissension. As Genchev indicates, this imperative became the basis of further disagreements and antagonisms to mark the peculiar relationships between the well-established and successful 'elders,' on the one hand, and the new, ambitious and optimistic, but devoid of a "glorious past" 'youth' that came after them (1991, 285 and Dr. Krŭstev 1898, 93).

The new intelligentsia differed significantly from their forerunners. One of their most discernible characteristics was the type of education they had received. Many of the modernists pursued higher studies or specialization in Western European universities and institutions (mostly in Germany and France). According to Moser, "this educational gap was sufficient in itself to engender certain coolness between the representatives of the old and the new in Bulgarian culture" (1972, 120). An additional factor that deepened the rift was the conscious orientation of the Bulgarian modernists toward Western Europe as a depository of cultural blueprints for modernization, a position that came into conflict with the typical pro-Russian orientation of the older generations. Also, since the early 1900s, Bulgarian intellectuals had to assert their presence in a fiery struggle with the growing proletarian movement and literature, whose adherents too were strongly pro-Russian. This fact blurred the picture even more, making the struggle for 'Europeanization' and modernization of Bulgarian society rather intense and complicated. Similar to Ukraine, the structure of the national cultural space was thus clearly polarized along the axis Western Europe – Russia (cf. Penev 1924, Sheitanov 1925, Radoslavov 1928, Traianov 1932).

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[6] Cf. also Iavorov (n. d.), Debelianov 1912, 1914b, Penev 1924 and others.

[7] Page citations refer to the reprint in Iliev 1992, 64-66.

The opposition is extremely important for it exemplifies the choices for national development that the Bulgarian nationalist intelligentsia entertained at the time. It also reveals the specific preferences and motivation that led the representatives of the younger generation to look up to Europe for examples to follow. As it happened in other small nations, in addition to being familiar with Western culture, the new intelligentsia of Bulgaria operated from a broader international perspective, attempting to locate the place of their nation-state in the balance of geo-political powers in Europe, openly articulating an ambition to participate as equals in continental affairs. To illustrate this point, let me cite here the words of a loyal patriotic intellectual, who in 1925 made an honest attempt to conceptualize the complex intertwining of internal and international politics in modern Bulgaria: "Our continent, for various reasons, is divided into two opposing camps: Western Europe and Russia," he writes. "Bulgaria is located on the borderline, and therefore is of great international importance. Today, the nation-state continues to play the same role it used to play in the past [i.e., a frontier], […] maneuvering between Scylla and Charybdis. […] Present-day Bulgaria struggles to cope with the two forces generated by the polarization of

European political power," thus reflecting those in its internal conflicts.[8] From this perspective, the new generation of Bulgarian intellectuals felt historically challenged to bear responsibility of immense proportions, which somehow added to their frustration and confusion, also escalating the conflicts between different generations.

When talking about the factors determining the formation of the Bulgarian modernist intelligentsia at the beginning of the 20th century, what also should be taken into account is that the younger generations operated under conditions of a centralizing state authority, which in most instances pursued its own national-political and cultural agenda. Regardless of being considered 'a backwater' of both Russia and Europe by national as well as international elites, this state was powerful enough to promote certain cultural practices while denouncing and suppressing others. As previously mentioned, the establishment of national culture was a central task of Bulgarian state policy. Its main goal was the 'molding' of Bulgarians, whom "[the national] culture [would induct] into the imaginary space of national values and experiences" (cf. Jusdanis 1991, 40). This was a compulsory strategy because national identity, "as a repertory of conventions and beliefs, has to be acquired" (cf. Jusdanis 1991, 40). In this respect, Bulgarian modernists represented one of the practices of modernization officially sanctioned by the national state, i.e., one that can be best described as 'Westernization' of Bulgarian society.[9]

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[8] Нашият материк се е разпаднал по ред причини на два враждебни лагера: Западна Европа и Русия. България лежи на самия предел между двата бойни стана и притежава голямо международно значение. Тя и сега, при нови условия, продължава вековната си роля. От старо време още корабът на държавата ни е трябвало да плува през опасния проток между Харибда и Сцила. […] В днешна социална България се стълкновяват две сили, които сякаш изхождат от двата полюса на сегашна политическа Европа (Sheitanov 1925, 266; page citations refer to the reprint in Elenkov and Daskalov, 266-269).

[9] It should be noted, nonetheless, that the relationships between Bulgarian modernists and the state were very often strained. For example, Pencho Slaveikov left the country, unable to handle the oppressing political reality and died in exile in 1912.

Nevertheless, the modernists saw the insufficient elaboration of the nation's cultural identity resulting from the protracted nationalization of the cultural institutions as a condition that provoked a negative international perception of the Bulgarian nation. In their attempt to remedy the situation, they elevated national high culture as the essential institution of national signification as well as a guarantee of the nation's singularity and originality. By definition, they considered traditional Bulgarian identity to be founded on a rather inferior sense of 'self.' Respectively, their cultural revolt developed as a reaction against the self-colonizing implications of the conservative version of cultural and national identification predicated on the absence of a high Bulgarian culture (Kiosev 1998).

The form of cultural nationalism they elaborated in response to the state political nationalism betrays close similarities to the ideology of subversion that their Ukrainian counterparts espoused in pursuit of establishing the Ukrainian nation as an equal participant in world civilization. In both societies, cultural nationalism evolved as "an anti-traditionalist and a political movement" distinctive from political nationalism (cf. Hutchinson 2000, 591). By insisting on the creation of a high national culture that would unify and integrate the citizens of their respective communities, modernist artists and critics in those localities engaged in a form of social activism whose ultimate purpose was to drive their 'marginal' societies out of what the patriots perceived as a state of spiritual stagnation. They sought to create an exceptionally sophisticated aesthetic culture in order to attain "a higher stage of social evolution" that would embody "a higher synthesis of both the 'traditional' and the 'modern' " (cf. Hutchinson 2000, 591).

Similar is the fate of Petko Iu. Todorov, who died in 1916 in Switzerland. Peio Iavorov committed suicide on October 29, 1914 after a strenuous and unpleasant conflict with the Bulgarian authorities regarding the death of his wife, Lora Karavelova, the daughter of the famous Bulgarian politician Petko Karavelov and niece of the prominent revivalist writer Liuben Karavelov.

I would like to make one last point regarding the formation of the Bulgarian modernist intelligentsia – namely that the authority of the Bulgarian traditional cultural system, in principle, remained very strong. Hence, since the vernacular culture continued to play a crucial role in the articulation of a national-identity, the shaping of modern Bulgarian consciousness thus was determined by a number of retrospective mythologies, which underpinned the prevalent self-definition (Elenkov 1994, 5-26). These mythologies affirmed the institutional existence of the *ethnos* as a continuous, natural, and 'primordial' entity (*narod*), and time and again reinforced the conceptualization of the Bulgarian nation as a "single macro-ethnic community with a shared history, language and culture" (cf. Gutierrez 2001, 12) that encompassed both the denizens of the kingdom of Bulgaria as well as those residing outside the state geographical borders. Consequently, in spite of the efforts to resist the officially endorsed version of the national myth and identity, each new generation of modernist intelligentsia could not completely rid itself of the bonds that tied it to its predecessors. As a result, the modernists were extremely vigilant in formulating modernization objectives that did not appear to be too drastic or modern for fear of compromising the integrity of the national ideal. For instance, Traianov identified this feature clearly. In his interview with Atanas Dushkov, the modernist poet stated the following: "Nationalism (*rasovo dvizhenie*) on the one hand aspires to distinguish the culture of a given people by condensing the ethnic color, which is understandable. On the other hand, our experience shows that such movements in spite of their extraordinary idealism subliminally carry within the bacillus of a certain spiritual conservatism."[10]

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[10] Защото, ако расовото движение на една страна се стерми да обособи културната проява като сгъсти националните багри, което има своето оправдание, от друга страна, сега, както и в миналото – опитът ни учи, че такива движения въпреки крайния си идеализъм носят в себе си, без да осъзнават, бацила на известна духовна реакция (Traianov 1935, 92).

What becomes clear in modernist writings is that as a cultural ideology Bulgarian Modernism originated in the societal pressures and struggles for political and cultural control during the first decades of the 20th century, often provoking deeply running contradictions and rivalries that stemmed from the confusion and uncertainty about the national fate. This confusion was expressed in the formulation of a contradictory concept of nation, one similar to the type of "collectivistic civic nationalism" that Greenfeld has identified (cf. 1996a, 107; 103-105). Thus, the antipathies and disputes between different generations of the Bulgarian intelligentsia as well as the divide between the intelligentsia and the 'people' – most noticeable after the arrival of the Bulgarian modernists on the historical scene – transpired as the most significant loci of socio-cultural distress in the newly formed nation-state.

In conclusion, the Bulgarian nationalist intelligentsia emerged as a "class divided against itself" (Meininger 1987, 399). The intellectuals were forced to compete between themselves for positions and influence. Perhaps, they were too numerous and too well educated for their society. They were disappointed by the little appreciation the general population showed to the traditional roles of cultural activists. Indeed, this conviction represents one of the most steadfast contentions voiced by Bulgarian modernists regardless of the historical timeframes in which they operated. It is found in the writings of the early modernists such as Pencho Slaveikov, Peio Iavorov, and Teodor Traianov, as well as writers and poets, who worked in the late 1920s and early 1930s (Geo Milev, Kostantin Gŭlŭbov and others).[11] Thus, while longing for prestige and recognition, both the old and the new intelligentsia, especially in the post-liberation period, continued thriving on what one Bulgarian historian has called "the anti-modernization ideological delusion," which, in principle, expressed the angst generated by the experienced social, political and cultural changes (Elenkov 1994, 14). Furthermore, the Bulgarian West European oriented intellectuals were unprepared psychologically to accept the disillusionment and frustrations accompanying the processes of radical social change. As a result, they failed to come to terms with their environment. The majority of Bulgarian nationalist intelligentsia developed patterns of behavior that clearly indicated the split of personality, negativism, and alienation from its society. As already noted, the socio-historic realities of independent Bulgaria triggered a specific reaction to the changes occurring after liberation from colonial rule, which constituted a complex psychological attitude of duality and ambivalence, simultaneously rejoicing and lamenting the influences and ideas imported from Europe, fervently defending and pursuing the ethnic specificity of the Bulgarian national culture.

5.3. Folk Culture and Modernity:

Rediscovering Bulgarian Cultural Originality

In the early 1900s the prevalent cultural ideology propagated by the West European oriented Bulgarian intellectuals was, as in the rest of Europe, the ideology of Modernism. Despite the extreme diversity of ideas and beliefs proliferating then in the Bulgarian cultural space, which, as the American critic Charles Moser points out, make difficult defining the "main thrust" of the post-liberation period, especially from the 1890s on, "the era's fundamental note was sounded by the men gathered about the critic Dr. Krŭstev and his journal *Misŭl'*" (1972, 120).

The first professional literary journal in Bulgaria was published from 1892 to 1907 and the intellectual group that formed around it included the most fervent advocates of West European Modernism. The circle functioned under the intellectual leadership of two Western educated individuals, namely Dr. Krŭstev and Pencho Slaveikov. It encompassed the first generation of post-colonial Bulgarian intelligentsia, mostly people who were brought up in exaltation of the

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[11] Cf. Traianov 1935; Debelianov 1912 and 1914b, Milev, G. 1921d.

revolutionary ideals and tried to fulfill the high mission of 'creators' of the national cultural values with extreme devotion and patriotic zeal, assuring, rather than breaking the continuity of tradition. It is interesting to note that Bulgarian literary scholarship traditionally refers to this period as "the era of individualism" in modern Bulgarian literature (Radoslavov 1935, Bogdanov 1970, Igov 1990). The ensuing discussion hopes to clarify why this is a justifiable 'label.'

Bulgarian modernists, as the critic Georgi Konstantinov wrote, imported into Bulgarian literature "the longing for the eternal, the striving toward an aesthetic and moral Absolute" while simultaneously defending the true democratic values of social existence. They aspired to express "the timeless aesthetic and ethic virtues of the collective [i.e., ethno-cultural] life and creativity, standing against retrograde, petty-minded and materialistic values" that conflicted with the idea of spiritual artistocratism.[12] The modernists strove to assert themselves in an autonomous cultural space, whose ethnic structure allegedly was established and dominated by an ethnic Bulgarian identity. Hence, people like Pencho Slaveikov, Peio Iavorov, Teodor Traianov, and later Dimcho Debelianov, Liudmil Stoianov and others, promoted an 'art for art's sake' ideology as an intellectual resource most potent in ensuring the complete nationalization of the Bulgarian cultural realm.

Adopting foreign models in order to create a high national culture of equal standing with the cultures of other European nations is a strategy the modernists implemented with the intention to enforce higher synthesis of 'autochthonous' (*svoe, rodno*) and imported (*chuzhdo*) to warrant the distinctiveness of the collective 'self' in its interactions with the world, thus building culture that was also capable of setting the foundation for the political and social integration of the

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[12] В литературата [the literary circle Misŭl] внася нови идеи – на първо място дирането на вечното, естетически и духовно трайното в бита и народното творчество, а в обществения живот върви паралелно с най-свободолюбивите за времето си течения, враждува с всичко, което е назадничаво, дребнаво, чуждо на духовния аристократизъм (Konstantinov 1943, 203).

Bulgarian nation (Milev, T. 1925; Gŭlŭbov 1927b, 62). This is the main thrust of their modernization offensives. The goal remains constant, providing a common objective to direct the efforts of the first modernists, as well as the cultural building incentives of all succeeding generations of intellectuals, who, as Moser claims, "may be most conveniently classified by their attitude toward the 'modernists' who [in the early 20th-century] predominated, however, briefly, in Bulgarian letters" (1972, 120). In this respect, although Bulgarian Modernism emerged as an extremely diverse conglomerate of personal attitudes and intellectual positions, the shared national interest and the understanding that Bulgarian professional artists safeguard the creation of spiritual and moral values, being the only social agency competent to define the essence of a *modern* Bulgarian national identity, somewhat united them as a social group.

Gregory Jusdanis has convincingly argued for Greek culture that the idea of an autonomous aesthetic, i.e., the cultural ideology of Modernism in the early 1900s was imported as a means to resolve the tensions created as a result of the project of modernization and Westernization undertaken by the Greek intellectual and mercantile elites. In my view, the same argument also holds true for the cultural aspirations of the Bulgarian intelligentsia in the early 1900s. The difference from the Greeks is, nonetheless, very clear. Bulgarian progressive intellectuals did not attempt to 'inscribe' their nation in the master-narratives of Western Europe as the Greek elites did, who claimed that the modern European culture was founded on the classical Greek heritage and sought help in establishing their history and collective identity around the notion of "direct successors" of Ancient Greece, the "cradle of European civilization" (cf. Jusdanis 1991, 25). Indeed, Bulgarian modernists entertained other options. They operated in the Slavic region, alleging the critical role of medieval Bulgarian culture for the development of Slavic civilization. For example, let me cite Iavorov here, who expressed his cultural optimism in the following manner: "The Bulgarians have purified their soul throughout the centuries of constant suffering [and are ready now] for their sublime mission that is to keep alive and complete the achievements of the Slavic genius."[13] Traianov voiced a similar conviction, claiming that only "an individual who is true and loyal to the Bulgarian nation" is capable of being "a true Slav and an excellent European" (*samo edin dobŭr, fanatichen bŭlgarin mozhe da bude ne samo istinski slavianin, no i edin otlichen evropeets*; 1932, 95). As the symbolist confessed, this conviction sustained his faith in the success of Bulgarian society's modernization and Europeanization (cf. also Milev, G. 1964, 223).

As is apparent from the above citations, the modernists labored to broaden this geopolitical space aiming at making Bulgarian national culture both 'modern' and 'European'. Their position was, of course, fiercely disputed. As noted earlier, the modernists were not the only group striving to become the cultural leadership of the Bulgarian nation (Radoslavov 1935, 125-140). In this light, the literary debates between the younger and the older generations of Bulgarian writers very much resemble the debates in Ukrainian literature, although these took place in a different political context. Concerned with creating a respectable national image for the international, especially European community, Bulgarian modernists used a similar rhetoric and arguments to denounce the realist-populist orientation of their older fellow-writers.

The orientation and content of modern Bulgarian culture are probably the two most significant issues that different generations of intellectuals in the beginning of the 20th century approached from conflicting standpoints. Because of the strong sense of inferiority permeating the traditional Bulgarian cultural identity as represented in the writings of the realists-populists (Todor Vlaikov, Mikhalaki Georgiev, Tsani Ginchev, and so on) and the older revivalist intelligentsia, the modernists uncovered in it a solid reason for relentless attacks against their predecessors. A primary case in point is the clash between Pencho Slaveikov and Ivan Vazov (cf. Angelov 1998-2002). Although betraying certain personal enmities too, their argument developed mostly as a disagreement over the construction of high national culture and the national identity it would embody. On the one hand, as a typical realist Vazov defended a 'demotic' notion of Bulgarianness, identifying the Bulgarian peasantry as the core of the nation. Proclaiming that the purpose of the intelligentsia was to serve the 'people' by educating, communicating and defending their interests, the artist thereby suggested that, in order to ensure a truly modern and prosperous future for the Bulgarian nation, the needs and interests of the masses should be of central concern (Vazov 1957, 241-244). He saw the 'people' as an anonymous, undivided, and powerful mass whose newly awakened commitment to its freedom and prosperity brought together and made into a cohesive group. The superior literary representation of this 'demotic' concept of the nation is found in Vazov's novel *Under the Yoke* (*Pod Igoto* 1889), where the national poet portrayed the Bulgarian people's massive enthusiasm and determination to win their independence during the unsuccessful revolutionary uprising of April 1876.[14] Vazov's idealized image of the 'people' accentuated the integrity of the group, willfully ignoring any references to the heterogeneity of class or political interests that this particular revolutionary act involved because his purpose as a writer was to commemorate the group's colossal fervor and solidarity of hopes, emotions, and actions in the name of achieving national liberation. In other words, Vazov's representation and construction of the 'people' embraced nationalism as a mass phenomenon, exalting its power to inspire many people to think, feel, and act as one.

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[13] Сякаш българинът през своите страдания толкова векове бе пречистил душата си за върховни прозрения – за да продължи и довърши делото на славянския гений (n. d., reprinted in Iliev 1992, 72).

In contrast, Slaveikov operated with an elitist conception of the nation, arguing that the uncouth Bulgarian peasantry first of all had to be transformed into a community of refined and intellectually sophisticated individuals, who can freely express their unique personalities and creativity. His notion of 'people' placed emphasis on the intellectuals thereby insisting that possessing extremely valuable cultural capital – namely, a West European education, – they were the only legitimate creators of moral and aesthetic values in the undeveloped state. The critic argued that such individuals were spiritual aristocrats and natural leaders, capable of proposing beneficial role models for the rest of society.

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[14] See "A Nation Intoxicated" (*Pianstvoto na edin narod*, chapter 16) in Vazov 1971, 264-266.

> I have stressed times and again that a writer who respects himself and his profession should not espouse pitiful and narrow-minded doctrines, or belong to feeble schools of thought. [...]
>
> The true artist is a spiritual aristocrat, without preconceived notions about his art and purposes. [...] His own imagination ought to inspire him to create; the reality should be merely an 'object' of scrutiny and construction.[15]

From this position, the modernist declared that the ultimate duty of artists was to serve Art and remain free from influences and social pressures, refraining from participation in the political quarrels and struggles for power, holding in their heart the single most noble ideal: "[to express] [...] one's free heart and free mind" (*svobodno sŭrtse i svoboden um*; Slaveikov 1959, 187). Once attaining such inner freedom, artists were obliged to lead their people, being the cultural messiahs whose field of expertise was the formulation and administration of those moral and ethical principles that would hold their society together and guarantee a dignified and fulfilling individual existence. Hence, Slaveikov insistently demanded from Bulgarian poets and writers to initiate the transformation "of each Bulgarian into a human [i.e. an individual]" (*izvoiuvane na choveka v bŭlgarina*; Slaveikov 1959, 177).

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[15] Казвал съм не веднъж: писател, който уважава себе си и своето дело, не трябва да пристъпва прагът на никоя школа, на никое теке, в което с молитвеници в ръка са дошли да струват метани достойните за съжаление. [...] Истинският художник трябва да бъде елин, без катехизис за изкуството и неговите цели. [...] Личното вдъхновение да е подбуда за творчество, действителността – единствен предмет за наблюдения и въздействие (Slaveikov 1959, 186-87; cf. also Dr. Krŭstev 1994).

Thus, the aesthetic ideas of West European Modernism also served to strengthen the position of Bulgarian modernists as professionals, vesting prestige and value in their cultural building initiatives. The attempt to affirm their status as cultural leaders of the young nation is best represented by Slaveikov's conviction that the autonomy of art makes it impossible for artists to participate in explicit political manipulation (Slaveikov 1959, 50). His version of cultural nationalism, unlike the cultural vision and ambitions of Vazov and the realists, distinguished culture as a sphere controlled by artists, and proclaimed it independent from the political sphere which in his view was a social sphere on its own, ruled by individuals of a different vocation (Slaveikov 1959, 53). On these grounds, Slaveikov discredited Vazov's contributions, expunging him from the national literary canon, because, as the modernist critic stated, Vazov's writings catered to the 'crowd,' simply expressing feelings and emotions that the collective deemed important. In consequence, he subordinated the subjective authorial voice and exceptional personality of the artist to the will and power of the illiterate, animal-like (*vdobichena*) peasant mass (Slaveikov 1959, 196).[16]

The language used by Slaveikov when assessing the writings of his predecessors, especially the realists-populists, is extremely derogatory and, at times, even obscene. His critiques exhibit very little tolerance and understanding; his personal attacks against Vazov in particular, manifest a deeply running obsession and oftentimes, uncompromising modernist determination to break away from established traditions, to scandalize and challenge the accepted societal order. The following passage encapsulates the differences between the old and the new generation of artists in Bulgarian *belles lettres*. When concluding another of his personal attacks against Vazov, the modernist critic crossly remarked:

> Our current readership appreciates and comprehends only Mr. Vazov's [writings] because his language is understandable, light, and flows naturally,

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[16] Cf. similar criticisms in Stoianov 1920-21 and Debelianov 1914a.

> yet it is a lifeless and barren language, for his writings do not express the heart of a living person with [the complexity of conflicting emotions] that normally move an individual. All is bleak and simplistic so that even [the least educated of peasants] can regurgitate it. […]
>
> [The new generation of poets] is discontented with simply touching on a subject, saying plainly what they think. The [modern] poets are not interested in the idea itself but in the nuances of its expression. Is it surprising then that the contemporary reader, who barely can understand a forthright journalistic thought, cannot understand us? We do not use language to convey deep, but unoriginal and thus, useless thoughts. We try to flesh out the idea-life, expressing one's personality and temperament.[17]

Slaveikov ended his critique on a more general note, declaring that the "truths and ideals motivating the past are now obsolete." The modernist critic enthusiastically admitted that the representatives of his generation, in contrast to their precursors, craved "emancipation […] from the haunting ghosts of the past, emancipation from traditions, established notions and ideas, which confine the individual spirit and completely destroy one's [artistic creativity] and vitality."[18] His cultural optimism derived from his firm conviction that, as the creators of values, the younger generation of intellectuals had to offer "to the citizens and citizens-to-be [of the modern Bulgarian state] a precise idea of their geography, history, culture and resources […] allowing them to value and defend sovereignty and self-rule" (cf. Gutierrez 2001, 12; Slaveikov 1959, 313) thereby encouraging the sublimation and admiration of the Bulgarian nation.

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[17] За читатели като сегашните наши, понятен, лек и хубав език има само г. Вазов – защото той е гладък и безсъдържателен, неписан с ръка на жив човек, под диктовка на сърце, биещо любов и злоба. Всичко е равно и гладко в тоя език, [...] да може да го мляскат беззъби уста. [...] Ние не се задоволяваме да кажем, както сварим, надве-натри, мисълта си и с това да свършим; дори често пъти нас не ни интересува самата мисъл, а нюанса заради който я изказваме ний, – и чудно ли е, че читателя не ни разбира, тоя читател, който едва разбира дори и пряка вестникарски казана мисъл! Ние не използуваме езика като средство за изказване може би на дълбока, но безплътна, за това и безплодна мисъл – а за открояване на мисълта-живот, за изразяване на един индивидуалитет и темперамент (Slaveikov 1959, 196-98).

[18] Освобождаване [...] от призраците на миналото, от традиции, установени понятия, които налагат окови на съзнателния човек и убиват неговата жизнерадостност (Slaveikov 1959, 204).

Above all, Slaveikov's cultural optimism originated from the belief that the literature, and by extension the culture, produced by his fellow-modernists offered the most powerful tool for social integration since it sought to 'bring together' the fragmented *ethnos* by reviving the most ancient and indigenous roots of Bulgarian spirituality. These roots, Slaveikov thought, were locked in the relics and vestiges of Bulgarian folk songs and tales; therefore, he urged the new generation of intellectuals to dig up this heritage, to know it and love it because it contained the Bulgarian soul and spirit in their purest form:

> The modern, poorly educated Bulgarian [intellectual] knows nothing about Bulgarian folk songs and does not understand them; thus, he dislikes them. Lacking artificial pompousness, insincere declamatory pathos, sophisticated rhyming schemes and other superficial 'trinkets,' which so generously embellish [modern lyrics], traditional Bulgarian poetry is incomprehensible to those representatives [of the Bulgarian intelligentsia], who have spent years, studying abroad and who are 'blinded' by the lustre of the big European cities; they certainly cannot appreciate [our folklore]. Only a handful of young poets are able to enjoy sincerely the beauty and uniqueness of [Bulgarian traditional songs]. They love and understand them, seeking inspiration in the traditional texts, and I believe, the future belongs to these artists. Their poetry is riveting and invigorating, infusing contemporary Bulgarian poetry with fresh blood, assisting its establishment as a national enterprise.[19]

The critic's preference was for pagan myths and pre-Christian legends preserved in the collective memory of the Bulgarian community. While in fact attempting to re-establish Bulgarian folklore as a unifying system of symbols that encapsulated Bulgarian cultural distinctiveness, Slaveikov also re-discovered it as an inexhaustible mine of national treasures and cultural pride. In his analysis of

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[19] На нашия слабокултурен българин е чужда народната песен, той не я обича, защото не я проумява, защото не я знай. Отсъствието на декламация, на изкълчени чувства, на звучни рими и други външни украшения, каквито с пълни човали му дава изкуствената песен – това не може да се хареса на отстъпниците от своя народ, на онези, които са прозяпали младини по чужбина, по улиците на големите европейски градове. Само един-двама от младите български поети разбират, обичат и се влияят от народната песен и, аз вярвам, тям принадлежи бъдещето, тъй като с произведенията си те внасят в изкуствената българска песен нова и свежа струя и способстват с това тази песен, в по-нататъшното си развитие, да се установи твърдо на национална почва (Slaveikov 1959, 116).

Petko Iu. Todorov's modernist idylls based on motifs or images borrowed from Bulgarian folk songs, the critic suggested that to seek the past, a return to its sources was needed in order to keep alive the national ideal, aspiring the moral regeneration of the Bulgarian nation. "To accomplish the moral rebirth of the individual [Bulgarian]" was a credo that expressed the essence of the new national ideology sustaining the modernists' hope and faith in the future (Slaveikov 1959, 66-67; 199).

Hence, Slaveikov held folk texts to be the most authentic source of individual creative inspiration (1959, 83-84). However, in contrast to the mainstream approach to folklore during his times which in somewhat romanticized fashion sought to validate the merit of Bulgarian traditional heritage as a 'communal asset' by insisting on the interpretation of traditional folk items either as ethnographic facts or as expressions of the anonymous collective 'voice' and will (Shishmanov 1966), the modernist critic saw in Bulgarian folk culture a repository of personal expressions, a code-system capable of generating a limitless variety of individual voices and original 'languages.' Thus, he claimed that it provided Bulgarian artists with a home-grown stockpile of original meanings and a system of unique symbols through which each individual was able to know and express his or her identity and distinguish it from the identity of others (Slaveikov 1959, 117). For example, in his article entitled "*Bŭlgarskata narodna pesen*" (The Bulgarian Folk Song), Slaveikov exalted the beauty and subtle moralistic overtones of traditional Bulgarian songs, which in his view represented the purest incarnation of the national soul. He insisted that Bulgarian folk songs had preserved through the centuries an intimate connection with the pre-historical past and culture of the *ethnos*, imbued with values and ethics that come from the depth of pre-Christian (pagan) traditions and mentality (Slaveikov 1959, 83-84).

According to the modernist poet, the "pre-historic, mythological past" was the truest and most indigenous root of Bulgarian consciousness, representing the original, untainted mentality of the Bulgarian people (Slaveikov 1959, 83-84). He encouraged the new generation of poets to experiment with the 'shared' and readily available symbolic material, thereby transforming it into imaginative and highly idiosyncratic expressions of the artist's subjective experiences that signaled both his or her national belonging and distinctive individual self (Slaveikov 1959, 116). Thus, Slaveikov gave prominence to the vernacular culture as part of the national-cultural heritage, while at the same time indicating that "[it should serve] as a modality of innovation" (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 37). It is important to stress that Slaveikov assessed Bulgarian folklore critically, consequently failing to conform to the typical idealistic exaltation of traditional culture. He was completely aware that the traditional songs and tales belong to the past, constituting "the history of Bulgarian culture," and their role in the present was limited albeit essential (Slaveikov 1959, 93; 118-119). He suggested from the "treasures of our past to take only what is pertinent to the present times," acknowledging that Bulgarian vernacular culture was a container of the national experience that held universal and undying human values and wisdom. However, he poignantly warned that not everything it held could serve well the modern life and people (Slaveikov 1959, 67).

Slaveikov's rationale for re-discovering Bulgarian vernacular culture is twofold. On the one hand, he tried to propose a model for the creation of a high national culture that would 'rescue' Bulgarian cultural originality in times when foreign influences diluted the 'pure image' of Bulgarianness and distorted the expression of the 'authentic' cultural identity of the nation. As the modernist critic admitted, his motivation to collect and publish Bulgarian folk songs was not because he wanted to offer folkloric items or ethnographic facts to both domestic and international audiences but because he wanted to familiarize the European literary readership "with Bulgarian poetry in its purest national form" (Slaveikov 1959, 94). The fact that his essay introduced a collection of English translations of traditional Bulgarian folk songs, which the modernist critic and poet himself compiled and edited so that it could be published in London in 1904, is significant.[20] In my view, this signaled a distinctive purpose in the popularization of Bulgarian folklore for it now became a cherished *cultural* tradition used by the Bulgarian modernists in order to inscribe the Bulgarian nation within the European milieu. Demonstrating that, similarly to other nations, the Bulgarians were blessed with a long-lasting traditional culture deeply embedded in the national consciousness, they tried to exploit its integrative power to show to the world that the Bulgarian nation was united by a common national culture stemming from centuries old vernacular customs and rules, now seen as the earliest receptacles of Bulgarian ethnic uniqueness (Slaveikov 1959, 93-95).

Clearly then, Slaveikov's appreciation of Bulgarian folk culture derives from his impetus to create a prestigious and reliable international image of the Bulgarian nation. He engaged in the 'marketing' of traditional Bulgarian artifacts because he wanted to present the West with a credible account of Bulgarian cultural singularity and distinctiveness. In this respect, the modernist embraced Bulgarian folk culture (already transformed into a national cultural heritage) as the single most important ethnic principle to warrant the continuity and wholeness of national-cultural history (Slaveikov 1959, 84). He successfully proposed, "in the world of literature and learning, [an image of the] ideal national folk culture which enjoy[s] a complex relationship with actual folk practices" (cf. Thiesse and Bertho-Lavier 2001, 119), therefore enhancing the process of creating a unified national-cultural space (Slaveikov 1959, 92-94). Essentially, Slaveikov's musings on Bulgarian folklore reveal his ambition as a modernizer to open space for linking the national past and present wherein the local also meets the universal, thus engaging in a productive and creative exchange the purpose of which was to enrich Bulgarian national culture, preserving rather than compromising its singularity (cf. Thiesse and Bertho-Lavier 2001).

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[20] Cf. Boris Delchev's explanatory note in Slaveikov 1959, 427.

On the other hand, his exaltation of Bulgarian folklore was motivated by his desire to 'mobilize the masses.' His aspirations as a cultural messiah, advocating the Westernization and Europeanization of Bulgarian society limited the options he entertained in deciding on the tactics and policies of cultural nationalization. From this perspective, his ambivalent attitude toward the tradition surfaced as a strategy of distinction and subversion for as his meditations on Bulgarian traditional songs suggest, he was unable to accept the supremacy of the identity embodied in the Bulgarian traditional literature. Thus, another reason compelling Slaveikov to engage in the promotion of Bulgarian folklore was his revisionist ambition, which was expressed in the cynical reaction to the 'flaws' he discovered in the conventional construction of Bulgarian national identity. As a result, acerbic overtones and often disparaging remarks imbue most of his discourses dealing with Bulgarian folk culture. For instance, in his essay on Bulgarian folk songs, the modernist critic insisted that these songs "stink, emitting a stench of sickness that is the smell of the national soul, heavily injured by the blows of fate" (*dukhŭt na bolna dusha, bolna ot obidite na sŭdbata*; Slaveikov 1959, 119).

His language is definitely unpleasant, yet the passion and subtle ironical twists with which the modernist writer constantly laced his writings, compel one to appreciate the sophistication, wit and emotional suggestions of his poignant critiques, apparently targeting a highly educated and competent literary readership that was capable of deriving aesthetic pleasure from the implied intellectual 'game.' This is especially true for his falsified literary 'history' of the Bulgarian nation-state, narrated in his literary mystification *Na ostrova na blazhenite* (On the Island of the Blessed, 1910), a work of fiction and an extraordinary genre experimentation that represents Slaveikov's typical style. In addition, he wrote also a satirical fictional travelogue with the same title where he critically looked at the historical and social-political conditions of his contemporary Bulgaria, expressing strong discontent with the political system and the decisions of the ruling elite. This fictional travelogue was published posthumously in the modernist journal *Zlatorog* (1921).[21] Both texts (the literary history and the travelogue) complement each other, offering a total picture of contemporary political and cultural life in Bulgaria, also showing clearly Slaveikov's dissatisfaction with the direction of Bulgarian historical development.

In the words of the American scholar Charles Moser, his style "combined a deep respect for [the] national and individual characteristics with a striving toward the classical ideal of the universal" thereby attempting also "the synthesis of the romantic with the classical" (1972, 132). Slaveikov's poetry for example, especially his long narrative poems based on folklore motifs such as *Ralitsa*, *Boiko*, *Koledari* (Carolers), and above all his epic *Kŭrvava pesen* (Song of Blood), complement his articles and critical observations in providing examples of the type of literary experimentation the modernist artist endorsed. In these works, Slaveikov elaborated his original theory of 'spiritual aristocratism' and individualism, affirming as fundamental credo the principle of "the free heart and the free mind" (Slaveikov 1906). The modernist writer promoted the autonomous individual as absolute ideal. From this perspective, he recommended that Bulgarian authors focus on representing the intricate symbiosis of universal human qualities and national peculiarities that shaped each Bulgarian.

Thus, Slaveikov first introduced a novel understanding of what constituted the Bulgarianness of his people by putting an emphasis on universally human faculties rather than the ethnic features of their 'national character.' He was the first to suggest looking at personal identity as the only possible realization of national sentiments. On these terms, he strove to define what was the proper relationship between the individual and the society, soliciting from the community to recognize and accept individual human and civil rights, freedom and independence as the most valuable credentials of Bulgarian nationhood. This understanding motivated his deeply liberal position, his critical attitude toward the monarchy as a form of political governance and the national state as a modern political institution (Slaveikov 1959, 332-350). In principle, because Slaveikov's musings on Bulgarian folklore accommodated harsh criticisms of the 'national character' portrayed by the oral literature, they also created the impression that the rhetorical thrust of his reflections falls short of idolization. Thus, Slaveikov's adulation of Bulgarian vernacular culture was very distinctive for it manifested a highly ambivalent attitude, simultaneously commending and demeaning the traditional cultural heritage, and recognizing its influence while denying its ideological superiority and primacy. In this manner, most of the critic's sharp comments aimed at neutralizing the self-colonizing implications infiltrating the representation of the 'national character' in traditional folk songs and tales.

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[21] Cf. Reprint in Slaveikov 1959, 332-350.

According to Slaveikov, the national personality was weakened and corrupted due to long-term foreign colonization and the oppression of crude domestic rulers, which 'disabled' the Bulgarian people, transforming them into an inert and lethargic crowd. The lack of self-confidence and the thwarted sense of individualism Slaveikov viewed as the greatest collective 'disadvantage' and the 'worst of enemy' for achieving national consolidation. In spite of that, he insisted that the national character clearly encompassed characteristics that were at once positive and negative. Slaveikov found Bulgarian endurance and patience – traits that he waywardly described as "the virtues of pack-animals" – to be the source of Bulgarian infirmity of purpose, submissiveness, and suspiciousness. Nonetheless, he also insisted that these very qualities made the Bulgarian people daring risk-takers (Slaveikov 1959, 118-119). As he wrote, the Bulgarians had not failed to prove that they could rise to the occasion, being capable of heroic outbursts that have scared both Europe and the immediate neighbors, who without delay and at any cost today are prepared to prevent the independent political development of the Bulgarian nation (Slaveikov 1959, 119).

Apparently, the modernist employs here a historical allusion evoking the victories of the Bulgarian army over the Turks and the Serbs in several conflicts that led to the consolidation of the Kingdom of Bulgaria and the province of Eastern Rumelia, thus expanding the territory of the Bulgarian nation-state (1885, 1912-1913). It is tempting to suggest that the allusion was used as a means of invoking patriotic pride by reversing the semantics of the notion of 'weakness' since, as he conceded further in his essay: "The Bulgarian soul might be ailing, but it is not defective; its illness is the morning sickness of a mother, who carries a new life in her womb" (*Bŭlgarskata dusha e bolna, no ne e nedŭgava; neinata bolest e – bolestta na maika, pod chieto sŭrtse e zaroden nov zhivot*; Slaveikov 1959, 121). In addition to being a prime example of the subtle ironical twists the modernist writer constantly introduced in his critiques, this citation also shows one of the typical revisionist techniques employed by other Bulgarian modernists. I have in mind the utilization of conventionalized metaphors and images of sickness and physical disability, which in the revivalist and realist-populist writings usually were imbued with negative connotations. The ironical overtones used by Slaveikov when talking about the "illness of the national soul" indicate his attempt to undermine established stereotypes. His intention was to deconstruct and obliterate with a single rhetorical gesture the accepted meaning of routine metaphors (e.g., the blind person, the deaf person, the cripple, etc.), completely reversing the connotations customarily associated with them. Thus, the images of diseases and physical disabilities were re-charged and used to instill hope and stimulate a beneficial identification with the nation that invoke a feeling of pride rather than disgrace and humiliation (Peleva 1994, 42-44). The modernists like Slaveikov employed these in order to accentuate the "originality, individuality and extremely talented poetic rendering of various topics as well as their daring break away from the preceding literary traditions" (Peleva 1994, 42). In this context, the strategy was merely one of the many lines of attack that the Bulgarian modernists pursued in their attempts to redefine the identity of their community.

Another strategy they utilized, as Slaveikov's critical essays and his fictional works demonstrate, was the production of a number of archetypes, which "epitomized models of perfection, accomplishment and beauty" (cf. Gutierrez 2001, 7) and which suggestively illustrated that the Bulgarian nation and its distinctive culture were worthy of admiration and emulation. In this respect, many of the modernists, and above all Slaveikov, engaged primarily in idealization of the beloved motherland, nevertheless refusing to compromise the elitist position that underpinned their culture-building and modernization activities. For example, Slaveikov is likely the first modernist who used the folk image of the Balkan (mountain) to construct a positive national public image (Zlatanov 1998, 56-83). In his article "*Bŭlgarskata narodna pesen*" the poet suggested that the title of the collection of Bulgarian folk songs in English translation be "Under the Shadow of the Balkan" (*Pod siankata na Balkana*). He explained that this was an appropriate name because it evoked "the image of all mountains, scattered through the Balkan Peninsula" (a subtle expression of Slaveikov's hope that Bulgaria one day will be the dominant geo-political center of the region) and because "it [was] intimately connected with the history of Bulgarian people" (Slaveikov 1959, 84). The critic suggested a very distinctive demographic and ethnic profile of the Balkan Peninsula insisting that the Bulgarians were located predominantly in the mountains, "while the valleys were inhabited by the Turks" (Slaveikov 1959, 84). In fact, Slaveikov created an image that later modernists would develop and elaborate, transforming it into a positive stereotype that rivaled in its suggestive power the negative stereotype of Aleko Konstantinov's character *Bai Gan'o* (cf. also Sheitanov 1923-26, Gŭlŭbov 1926a).

Essentially, what Slaveikov did in order to construct this influential public symbol was to enhance the folk image's positive connotations by transforming it into a universal mytho-poetic literary image, which through the act of aesthetic representation gave the reader a chance to recognize the unified history and identity of Bulgarians within a semiotic context that strove to remove any connotations associating the image with the 'real' nation. Whereas previously, the Balkan was a concrete geographical *topos*, Slaveikov disregarded or explicitly refused to accept references to actually existing geographical localities ("The Balkan is not that mountain, […] which divides Bulgaria in two, extending from [its eastern to its western border]"; Slaveikov 1959, 84). Instead, the modernist highlighted the image's semiotic ability to encapsulate the continuity of the Bulgarian civilization. In this manner, the act of aesthetic idealization in fact introduced the sign not as an element culturally specific to a given geographical, ethnographical or political-cultural community, but a constituent of a 'spiritual' community, i.e., "an ontological category" that was the source of the very possibility for national existence because it was also the locus of the quintessential human quality (Zlatanov 1998, 67). I think that Zlatanov is right when conceding that Slaveikov approached the traditional image as an intellectual, who sought to unravel the complicated web of archetypal meanings and constitutive boundaries of the national self-identification (1998, 68). The model of collective identity proposed by Slaveikov confirmed the message of nationalism since in his writings, the universalism and "the idea of a world intellectual community offered a form of escape, a possibility to dream about" a harmonious and dignified collective existence in a nation that provided "real opportunities for social fulfillment" and personal success (cf. Greenfeld 1996a, 99).

In this context, it is necessary to mention that the collecting of folklore was a popular activity among the first Bulgarian modernists. However, unlike their predecessors, the modernists were motivated by purely aesthetic reasons, interpreting folkloric materials not as 'facts' of life, but as inherited cultural symbols whose aesthetic potential they had to explore and intensify. Besides Slaveikov, Petko Iu. Todorov, Peio Iavorov, Kiril Khristov, and Teodor Traianov were interested in uncovering and experimenting with the artistic potentials of Bulgarian folk songs and legends. Interesting evidence comes from Traianov's writings. His main rationale is that Bulgarian traditional poetry was a repository of national symbols strongly endorsing a dignified and prideful aesthetic experience of the nation. More specifically, in his review of modern Bulgarian poetry, the eminent modernist poet provided an in-depth analysis of a number of national symbols, including traditional Bulgarian folk songs. Traianov maintained:

> The Bulgarian people can also take pride in their folk songs. Next to the lyrical song, the Bulgarians have created deeply religious and original songs cross-breeding Christian and pagan motifs. Some scholars have even considered Bulgarian Christmas carols to be the most exquisite achievement of the Bulgarian poetic genius. Moreover, in the course of political and cultural colonization, the Bulgarians have created heroic songs (*haidushki pesni*) which, like indigenous ballads, praise the heroic deeds of those who fought for independence; these songs embody the longing for freedom at once celebrating the creative imagination of the Bulgarian people. [More importantly however], these texts also manifest the struggle of the artists to find the right [poetic] form. Thus, the agitated rhythm, powerful words, and majestic images, complement the fine sense of form and high morals that make some of these songs sound like ancient epics. The internal dynamism and the universal sensitivity embodied in the songs are magnificent (*orpheichni*) [...] (Traianov 1942, 87).[22]

Similar is the motivation of Petko Iu. Todorov, who, inspired by traditional Bulgarian songs, produced a number of modernist dramas and idylls, which Slaveikov at the time commended as leading examples of the expression of the “modern artistic spirit” (Slaveikov 1959, 199). According to Todorov’s personal confession, “[a]mongst the many sources of [Bulgarian] folk songs and tales, those that I favored in my work were the publications that I owned, and from which I borrowed the majority of my poetic images, themes, rhythms and the plot ideas for my dramatic works. These were the Miladinov's collection, the collection of Verkovič and Dozon's collection […]."[23] Todorov acknowledged that he borrowed directly from published material, usually motifs or images he found extremely beautiful or intellectually provoking, subjecting those to an intricate literary re-creation by means of injecting modernist meanings into traditional forms, preserving rather than eroding its specific 'native' structure (1958, 563). The experimentation of Todorov is significant because, as Slaveikov has noted, it represented a successful symbiosis of native and foreign, of traditional and modern. By infusing "the old content with new meaning," i.e., *original meaning* (*svoi smisŭl*) that arose "from the depth of the poet's individual consciousness and subjective experiences," Todorov like the "great European poets" brought "the past into the present" adjusting the tradition in accordance "with the rhythm and concerns of the artist's epoch and his innermost creative purpose."[24]

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[22] Българинът може да се гордее не по-малко и с народната си песен. Редом с чисто лирическата песен, народът е създал и проникната от религиозни представи песен, в която се смесват и кръстосват християнски и езически мотиви. Някои изследователи считат българските коледни песни за най-хубавото постижение на народностния дух. Освен това през дългите години на политическо и духовно робство се създадоха великолепните, неповторими хайдушки песни, които възпяват като истински народни балади героя и бореца. В тях народът е изразил целия си копнеж за свободен живот и е дал простор на творческото си въображение. В тези песни срещаме вече борбата за собствената, предопределена форма. Има хайдушки песни, в които бурливият ритъм, могъществото на словото и величавостта на образите, чувството за форма, както и една висша етика въздействат почти антично. Вътрешната динамика, а също и изразеното в тези песни мирово чувство към света са напълно орфеични [...]. Page citations refer to the reprint in Iliev 1992, 86-88.

What Traianov, Todorov, and Slaveikov essentially speak of here is the 're-contextualization' and consequent semantic modification of traditional folkloric items by means of which the modernist artist altered the common stock of literary elements so that now each aesthetic ingredient selectively borrowed from the oral literature became an expression of the artist's subjective thoughts and feelings. Through such personal semiotic manipulation, the traditional symbols were endowed with individualistic meanings, expressing modern concerns about individual autonomy and freedom. In addition, as Slaveikov acknowledged, the suggestive power of these symbols was enhanced since the ancient, especially negative meanings and connotations, were purged from their semantic field. As a result, the symbols start to express the delight of a harmonious and fulfilling existence marked by personal self-confidence and high self-esteem (Slaveikov 1959, 201).

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[23] Между множеството сборници от народни песни и умотворения, тия, които най-вече съм имал на ръка и от които са почерпени повечето поетически мотиви, образи, ритми и замисли за моите драми и идилии, са три: Сборника на Бр. Миладинови, "Женске песме" на Верковича и тоя на Дюзона (Todorov 1958, 563).

[24] На старите съдържания се дава нов смисъл, *свой смисъл*, който отразява модерната душа на поета и [...] хармонира с идеите на своето време и настроенията на своя творчески дух (Slaveikov 1959, 199; author's italics).

The endorsement of self-confidence and self-esteem as modern values was important for Slaveikov and the rest of the Bulgarian modernists because, in their view, it distinguished them from the previous generations of Bulgarian intellectuals. Self-liking (*samokharesvane*) was a virtue that Slaveikov, for example, held in high priority, insisting that it was a token of "internal freedom" (*vŭtreshna svoboda*; Slaveikov 1959, 201). The expression of the individual's internal freedom, the modernist critic assessed as a vital condition, especially if a society's incessant growth and prosperity was to be secured (Slaveikov 1959, 201). Slaveikov thus exalted individualism and freedom of expression declaring that the task of Bulgarian progressive intellectuals was not to "serve life" but to struggle to emancipate the individual, trying "to win the battles" in one's heart and mind, "liberating [one's] inner self (*dukh*) and stimulating [his or her] *humanism* – a weapon that the individual will continue to use in the future crusades [for spiritual progress]."[25]

Slaveikov was particularly influenced by Nietzschean philosophy and above all, by his theory of the 'Super-human,' i.e., the morally superior individual (spiritual aristocrat), who in Nietzsche's view embodied the quintessence of human nature. Nietzschean ideas also fascinated many of the early modernists, who embraced the intellectualizations of the eminent German philosopher as a form of an ideological 'panacea' to tone down the pressures from unresolved national questions and reduce the antagonisms that the modernization of their belated society had brought. Adapted to the needs of the local knowledge elite,

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[25] [...] да направим духът му свободен и всеем в съзнанието му *човещина*, с което оръжие той ще има да се бори в битвите на бъдещето (Slaveikov 1959, 205; author's italics).

Nietzsche's intellectualizations hence served as an ideological frame of reference that the progressive intelligentsia of *fin-de-siècle* Bulgaria used in order to elaborate an ambitious cultural program that proposed an alternative model of national consolidation to the state militant political nationalism.

From this perspective, the emphasis that early modernists put on the re-invention of Bulgarian oral traditions could be interpreted as a historical requirement arising from the specific conditions of their locality. Despite the pressures of a centralizing state and a social milieu whose demographic structure was defined by a 'poverty-stricken peasantry,' they strained to promote the ideals and ideas of modernity. Consequently, they extensively borrowed from Bulgarian folk culture, though selectively appropriating and considerably transforming its constituents. The most apparent reason, as my analysis of Slaveikov's attitude proposes, was to enforce the integration of cultural space and to disseminate a form of national identity that elevated the experience of Bulgarian culture and offered a positive model of self-identification in resistance to the traditional Bulgarian identity and its 'self-colonizing' ramifications. As already mentioned, the national identity articulated by the Bulgarian modernists was anchored in the high culture they aspired to create. Because the Bulgarian nation was already politically constituted, the modernists used the national heritage of Bulgarian folk culture as a mobilizing 'tool' in order to secure "a sense of national identity solidly in the population as a whole […] [and to] entrench a patriotic sense of identity which was national, community-based, transclassist, i.e., spanning different social classes" (cf. Thiesse and Bertho-Lavenir 2001, 126; Slaveikov 1959, 205).

Still, their relationship with the national oral tradition is a thorny question that has no simple explanation. I perceive the modernists' attitude as cynical (Sloterdijk 1987, 3-5) inasmuch as in their writings they did not attempt to idealize the Bulgarian *narod.* This cynical attitude was expressed in the form of selective appropriation and modernization of folklore elements that entailed a sophisticated re-working and re-invention as official (public) symbols of Bulgarian nationality. Informative in this respect is Ivan St. Andreichin's discourse that identified two principal sources the Bulgarian modernists explored in search of appropriate symbols: nature and folklore. The critic acknowledged that:

> [Bulgarian poets] drew from the inexhaustible treasure of [traditional] myths and legends […] that represent a type of ideal reality in which humankind mirrors itself […] In contrast to the Romantics, contemporary poets [i.e., the modernists] approached [this treasure] in a different manner. They attempted to grasp the eternal [universal] thought and ideal feeling. Where the Romantics saw folk tales and parables [i.e., folkloric items], the modernists saw symbols. […] Their interest in the legends and myths was nothing but an attempt to express their thoughts in a symbolical form, […] a feature that, together with the idealistic aspirations, clearly betrayed the most characteristic features of the new literary movement.[26]

To further illustrate this point, I would also cite here the thoughts of another prominent defender and practitioner of Bulgarian modernism:

> [Bulgarian] symbolist and individualist poetry […] connected the Bulgarian intelligentsia to the mysticism of the [native] land and the sanctity of the blood. The evolution of the Bulgarian symbolist movement happened rapidly after [the symbolist authors] began to seek for, and became attached to Bulgarian myths and traditions, for they [started] looking at the past more intensely. They hunted not for the history of the 'People,' but tried to come to terms with the fate of Bulgarianness; for them, this was a problem of utmost importance. Bulgarian individualism came to its end in those who initiated it, in order to emerge, as one German critic puts it, as supra-individualism. In this process, the individual emancipated himself or herself from the chains of

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[26] Те черпеха още от богатото съкровище на митовете и легендите [...] Не са ли те един вид идеална действителност, с която човечеството се представлява в собствените си очи? [...] Сегашните поети погледнаха другояче на митовете и легендите. Те търсеха в тях трайната мисъл и идеалното чувство; (за разлика от романтиците) където едните виждаха приказки и басни, другите виждаха символи [...] Тази благосклонност към легендата и мита [...] беше едно-единствено следствие от старанието да се изразят символистично мислите – а това спечели на сегашните поети името, с което те ги определиха. Тази характеристика се прибавя към идеалистичните стремежи, които, [...] са характеристични черти на новата школа (Andreichin 1907, 119; page citations refer to the reprint in Iliev 1992, 109-121).

> foreign materialism and became united with the ever-lasting Bulgarian spirit.[27]

For this reason then, the modernist re-contexualization of folklore items indeed is best viewed as a practice that was dictated by attempts to negotiate a respectful national image for the Bulgarians in front of the world community. As Slaveikov's, Andreichin's, and Traianov's utterances demonstrate, Bulgarian modernists engaged in a subjective re-invention of traditional items, which while "transposed as required for consumption by the cultured and highly sophisticated [domestic and international] public" (cf. Thiesse and Bertho-Lavenir 2001, 122), also became part of Bulgarian high national culture in the form of well-known individually authored literary works. The consequence was twofold: on the one hand, the modernists secured a niche for their distinctive production within the domestic market of cultural goods. On the other hand, they acted as a mediator and spokesmen for the Bulgarian nation in the international exchange of 'cultural capital' claiming both their authority over the tradition as well as their authority over the import and utilization of foreign models and cultural blueprints for modernization.

Perhaps, the explanation is that folklore was established as a chief code-system of the Bulgarian national culture through the centralizing cultural practices of the state. In this respect, the adulation and utilization of Bulgarian vernacular culture in modernist discourses could be explained as an attempt of Bulgarian progressive intelligentsia to "concede to the primacy of the state […] and [be] drawn in political nationalism" adapting to "the formal modes of organization in order to regenerate the nation" (cf. Hutchinson 2000, 602).

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[27] Символистичната и индивидуалистична лирика [...] свърза българския интелигент с мистиката на земята и светостта на кръвта. Развитието на т. нар. български символизъм ставаше главоломно бързо. Той потърси и намери връзката с българския мит и българското поверие, като погледна на миналото по-проникновено. Не историята на българския народ, а съдбата на българщината бяха проблемите, които вълнуваха до самоизгаряне творците. Българският индивидуализъм се изживя в самите тези, в които се роди, за да се преобрази в един свръхиндивидуализъм, както се изразява един немски критик. В този процес българският човек се освободи от чуждите окови на материализма и се приобщи към българския вечен дух (Traianov 1935, 94).

5.4. The Intelligentsia and the 'People:' Re-defining the Nation

Regardless of their interest in Bulgarian vernacular culture, the modernists clearly distanced themselves from its main 'producers' and consumers: the peasants. As previously mentioned, the divide between the modernist intelligentsia and the 'people' was another expression of the tensions prevalent among Bulgarian society at the turn of the 20th century and were provoked by the changes associated with the advancement of industrialization and modernization. Within this context, the ambivalent and selective attitude of Bulgarian modernists toward local traditions reveals an aspect of the specific cultural *habitus* of modernist intellectuals that suggests both their enthusiasm and acceptance of the occurring changes as well as their fear, confusion, and disillusionment. This ambivalence surfaced as a defining feature of their activities, fueling the modernist intelligentsia's social imagination and desire to revise, redefine, and disrupt existing social patterns, conventions, behavioral, and cognitive schemes. In this respect, the divide between the Bulgarian intelligentsia and the 'people' became an important boundary the modernists articulated, maintained, and manipulated in their struggle to establish themselves as the national-cultural elite. They used this boundary to promote their modernizing offensives. Thus, it symbolically represents another aspect of their cultural revolt, which concerned the attempts to discard the ethnographic concept of *narod* (People) constructed in the course of the liberation struggle and the traditional notion of Bulgarian national identity associated with it.

Like the Ukrainian modernists, their Bulgarian counterparts engaged in the creation of "an abstract community" of "unseen, unheard, [...] national fellows" (cf. James 1996, 33) that was based on "disembodied integration" rather than on immediate and direct face-to-face interactions. The 'community of strangers' (the nation) thus formed had, nevertheless, to be presented and "consummated concretely" (cf. James 1996, 33). The nation that Bulgarian modernists had conceived and imagined was slightly different from the abstract, primarily aesthetic concept the Ukrainian modernists constructed. Perhaps, because of the partition of what Bulgarian patriotic intelligentsia perceived to be their ethnic lands, Bulgarian intellectuals interpreted the nation in reference to a specific geographic and spatial framework as "being bound by particular conceptions of time, space, and embodiment" (cf. James 1996, 35; Slaveikov 1921, and his unfinished epic poem *Kŭrvava pesen*). Consequently, the modernists used some concrete spatial oppositions such as the village–city dichotomy, as well as the opposition between the center (capital) and periphery (province), as symbols of social distinctions that the diversification of labor in the modern state produced. While preserving the reciprocity of traditional relations, which continued to give meaning and structure to the social existence, this served as another intellectual strategy that also "reconstituted [outside the village] and at a more abstract level [...] the social relations and subjectivities associated with the emerging predominance of newer means of disembodied extension [the press, the printed book, and ultimately, the Bulgarian national culture]" (cf. James 1996, 45). In other words, the focus of this section is to trace how the Bulgarian modernist intelligentsia tried to "abstract a community among strangers" (cf. James 1996, 46) in a period when the reconstitution of national integration was perceived as urgently needed.

The effort to establish the coherence of the Bulgarian nation as an abstract quality that united a population which – in the eyes of the patriotic intelligentsia – was politically divided and lived under the influence of different power structures, motivated a very specific image of the nation. It accommodated the modernist perception of Bulgarianness as a benchmark of social integration championing individualism, nationalism, spiritual aristocratism and moral superiority. Accordingly, the modernists formulated the nation primarily as a spiritual and moral principle embodied in the incipient 'high' national culture, which they considered to be the only institution responsible for preserving and sustaining the integrity and wholeness of the Bulgarian *ethnos*.

Slaveikov, Dr. Krŭstev, Iavorov, Todorov and others spoke of high culture from the perspective of a knowledge elite, whose purpose was to transform and reform. Their disappointment in the political solutions of the national problem forced them to formulate an alternative concept of nationality, one that was grounded in the philosophy of individualism and the concept of Absolute beauty, both closely associated with the idea of a civilized and 'modern' individual (Slaveikov 1903, 52; K'orchev 1906). To the pragmatism and political opportunism of the state mechanism, they opposed their idealism and cultural optimism, envisioning Bulgarian society as a community of refined, cultured, and highly sophisticated citizens with developed aesthetic tastes, which freely expressed their creative mind and will. It is worthy citing from Radoslavov's emotionally charged introduction to his history of Bulgarian literature, where he remarked:

> At Neuilly, during the peace negotiations, the representatives of the defeated Bulgarian people were forced to listen [many] harsh accusations questioning the reputation of our nation-state. We are certain that if our recent efforts were focused on creating cultural and intellectual 'goods,' our fate today would have been different [especially] if we had followed a different ideal from the geographic-territorial [political one]. Other people did not vanish under crueler and more oppressive tyrannies and influences from older civilizations, because the world, familiar with their acts of heroism in the struggle for spiritual advancement, did not allow such breach of moral and divine justice to occur.[28]

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[28] Тежки са думите, които в Ньой, на заседанията за мир, бяха принудени да изслушат делегатите на победения български народ: България Царство ли е или Република? Можем да бъдем твърдо убедени, че ако нашите усилия в най-новата ни история бяха насочени в създаване на културни и духовни дела, нашата участ днес би била по-друга; ако на този зловещ аеропаг нямаха само географическото понятие за нашата земя. Други народи не загинаха под много по-опасни тирании и влияния на много по-стари цивилизации, само защото светът, познавайки ги, по техните велики подвизи на бойното поле на Духа, никога не би позволил да се извърши еднò подобно светотатство срещу божествените и морални закони (Radoslavov 1935, 6).

The critic, then proceeds with the following appeal, expressing his conviction that only the creation of a high national culture will bring to Bulgaria the desired international prestige: “To create! Creativity in the name of our Intellectual Growth! This is the ideal of our times and the ideal of the next generations to come.”[29] Even more explicit is Dimo K’orchev, who earlier defined the impetus of the modernist project in the following manner:

> To discover the ingredients of social life [civil society], and on their foundation, or under their bearing to look for new societal values is a requirement of the new [culture]. These constituents are not the individual, the family, the state and the community of co-nationals considered separately but their relationship with each other; this is what constitutes the grain of social life. Modern artists depict the individual alienated from those structures, thus inspiring one to become the creator of a new life. Being people, who live alone, those hermits [i.e. the modernist artists] seek no connection with their compatriots, stay away from society, and take no part in social activities. Their [deliberate] disengagement, however, is the most unconcealed and active form of [social] criticism demonstrated through their intentional acts of dissent.[30]

Along the same lines, K’orchev declared that:

> The time when we had to befriend the ‘people’ has passed. Earlier, we were weak and needed the support [of the masses]. The strong individual ought to be alone. He carries in himself everything that a human being needs, and hence, he becomes the focus of the new art. […] The strong individual is a super-human, said Nietzsche, and he was right. The actions of the strong individual provide superior examples for those who aspire to find meaning in life.[31]

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[29] Да творим! Творчество за делото на Духа! Ето един идеал на нашето време, идеал и на поколенията, които ще идват след нас (Radoslavov 1935, 6).

[30] Да намерим елементите на обществения живот и върху тях, или в тяхна среда, да търсим обществени ценности, е едно от изискванията на новата литература. Тези елементи не са личността, семейството, държавата, с нашите съчовеци, а отношенията им едно към друго. При новите писатели личността се уединява, отдалечава се от тези области на човешка дейност и става елемент, зародиш на нов живот. Като хора, които живеят за себе си, тия пустинници не се сближават със своите съчовеци, избягват обществото, не участвуват в неговите дела, но тази пасивност е най-голямата активност като критика, като съзнателно недоволство (qt. in Radoslavov 1935, 245).

[31] Мина времето, когато трябваше да дружим с хората. Тогава бяхме слаби и дирехме подпора. Силният трябва да бъде сам. Тои прибра в себе си всичко, що е

K'orchev's discourses reveal that the Bulgarian modernists found between the individual and the nation an intimate connection, evoked through the personal experience of nationality as a mutual bond generated through the internalized values of national culture and the subjective aspirations motivating the individual to reach the moral and aesthetic absolute. "The purpose of culture is to cultivate spiritual aristocrats, who approximate the genius. […] Is it unlikely for a democracy to triumph in a society where […] such a goal is impossible, such an ideal is absurdity, and its realization curbed in a remote and forgotten past?"[32] The modernist critic promoted Nietzschean ultra-individualism in order to substantiate his view that nationalism ought to unite through the shared aesthetic experience of beauty, harmony and "silence" (K'orchev 1907, 158).[33] "Art as a means for self-improvement encompasses three elements: God, silence, and Motherland [i.e. nation]."[34] K'orchev believed that a nation begins to truly exist at the moment when each individual realizes his connection with the rest of humanity; by resisting the "human tragedy," he or she commences ascent to a higher state of civilization, thus cultivating a superior vitality and resilience that springs from one's philosophical compliance with the human existential paradox: mortality. Therefore, the critic maintained, the purpose of art was neither "to solve issues" nor "to serve agendas;" it had to enhance "the synthesis of all cultural expressions created in the world" by means of exposing "the universal human essence

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нужно за човека и така става обект на новото изкуство. [...] Силният на света е свръхчовекут, казва Ницше – и той бе прав. Само мислите и делата на силния могат да служат като уроци за всички, които искат да осмислят живота (1907, qt. in Radoslavov, 244-5).

[32] Целта на културата е да създава все по-висши индивидууми, да се приближава все по-близко до гения [...] Възможно ли е едно тръжество на демократизма [...] когато като цел това е невъзможност, като идеал е абсурд, като действителност – едно далечно и забравено минало (K'orchev 1906, 151; page citations refer to the reprint in Iliev 1992, 138-153).

[33] Page citations refer to the reprint in Iliev 1992, 153-161.

[34] Изкуството като средство за самоусъвършенстване крие три елемента: Бог, Мълчние и родина... (K'orchev 1907, 158).

originating in God and our interactions with the divine" (K'orchev 1907, 158-159).

Thus, Bulgarian modernists developed an understanding of nationality as a universal fact, seeking to reinforce the appeal of the nation as a phenomenon of modern times. "The Nation is the Truth [toward which] the entire humanity aspires. Each individual attains it in his or her own way, therefore in each person the truth is manifested differently. *The merit of nationality is not in the diversity of forms* [in which it is experienced] but *in the intensity of that experience.*"[35] From this standpoint, K'orchev elaborated his cultural theory as a form of 'rooted cosmopolitanism,' according to which the universal human problems could be approached only from a national perspective. In this respect, his writings show that the boundary between the Intelligentsia and the 'people' supported the construction of the Bulgarian nation as a community based on individual acts of imagining and experiencing the nation for which national art and culture provided a feasible context. Accordingly, modern(ist) literature and art were conceived as instrumental in preserving "the linkage of individualized identities with the national one" (cf. Jusdanis 1991, 150; K'orchev 1906, 160-161). The separation of 'people' and intelligentsia, consequently indicated the distinction made between "national identities that emerge through open processes of debate and discussion" and identities that were imposed from 'above' by means of indoctrination (cf. Miller 1995, 39). In short, the modernists promoted their version of national identity as one that 'evolved naturally' during the exchange and dissemination of compelling cultural artifacts that conveyed "truths and nationality that everyone, wherever he is, can grasp, feel, and relate to" (*Modernostta im e v tui, che sochat rodinata i istini, koito vsichki, gdeto i da sa, mogat razbra i pochuvstva*; K'orchev 1906, 160), thus giving also the individual a choice to cast off those identities that were mainly "result of political imposition" (cf. Miller 1995, 39).

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[35] *Родина* е истината към която се стреми човечеството. Всеки стига до нея чрез себе си, затуй всекиму различно се открива. *Но нейната ценност не е в нееднаквостта на формата, а в степента на изчувстването* (K'orchev 1907, 160; author's italics).

The proper connection of individual and society in this manner was scrutinized excessively in the modernist discourses, which inexorably reiterated the need for the moral 'rebirth' of each Bulgarian, conceptualizing the extant reality as degrading to the individual's true humanity and identity (Slaveikov 1959, 179-180; 196). As Elenkov acknowledges, from the 1890s on the debate about the role and social function of the Bulgarian intelligentsia and its relation to the 'people' surfaced as one of the most heated public discussions in which all rivalry groups of intellectuals partook (1998, 64-75). In this way, the boundary was formalized, as it became part of the official negotiations of Bulgarian cultural identity that openly took place in the public sphere (Stefanov 1995, 205-220). In Elenkov's interpretation, this dichotomy reflected 'the poles of anxiety' identifying the reaction to the modernization of Bulgarian society where the 'people' conventionally have been constructed as a "key symbol of identification, opposed to the modern society" and its models, norms and rules of regulation (1998, 66). The debate about the role of the intelligentsia, then, argues the contemporary Bulgarian scholar, "implicates an attempt to formulate an ideology of the impossible public consensus" regarding the issues of culture and identity, which nevertheless "tried to bring together the sharply contrasting groups of intellectuals" and unite them on the basis of their opposition to the state, on the one hand, and the inert 'mass' of people, on the other (Elenkov 1998, 66-67).

To be sure, the notion of 'people' was employed in modernist discourses with a double meaning. For example, Dr. Krŭstev's article in response to the position of the state on the current educational problems during the so-called 'Teachers' Question' (1905-1908; Manafova 1987, 32) made a clear distinction between the 'people' (*narod*) and the 'mob' (*tŭlpa*, *masa*), identifying the intelligentsia as the 'core of the nation,' while discarding in a single rhetorical gesture the uneducated, illiterate, and uncultured *narod*:

> Any attentive and cognizant observant of Bulgarian society will be quite hesitant to decide whether the Bulgarians constitute ‘a People’ (*narod*). Indeed, our social formation could be identified simply as a conglomerate of individuals, a geographic and ethnographic, even administrative entity, but a nation it is not and cannot be, because it lacks the conditions for that. The mass we can ignore – its psychology is different. Let us limit ourselves to considering the intelligentsia. Does it feel some sort of responsibility towards the collective, in itself perhaps an abstract notion, yet very concrete in its existence? Did [the intelligentsia] demonstrate such unified consciousness; did it commit an organized collective, social or intellectual action, driven exclusively by its own emotional attachments and beliefs? We do not single out specific persons, for we do not claim that there are no individuals who sincerely and altruistically [work for their society]; we claim that even these people have failed to produce a coherent, organic whole, [i.e. a nation], acting as *one*.”[36]

Perhaps Stefanov and Elenkov are right when trying to conceptualize the divide that the modernists constructed in the beginning of the 20th century between the Intelligentsia and the ‘people’ as an “intellectual technique” by means of which “the crises within the national social space were controlled through [a series of] discursive catharses” (Stefanov, qt. in Elenkov 1998, 68). The Bulgarian nation in the modernist discourses thereby emerged as an abstract, inclusive, primarily ‘ethical community’ (*nravstveno obshtestvo*) of citizens, which neither the state nor the traditionally defined ‘people’ could contain in their one-sided, limited dimensionality. Therefore, in contrast to the previous modes of identification, the modernists articulated their cultural nationalism, arguing that the nation was an expression of a higher social bond that was realized in the internalization of common values, endorsed through the national high culture.

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[36] Един строг и по-дълбок наблюдател на нашия обществен живот дълго би се колебал, преди да реши дали съществува български *народ*. И действително това, което ний образуваме, може да бъде един много добър конгломерат от индивидууми, едно географическо и етнографско или даже административно цяло, но народ то не е и не може да бъде, защото му липсват всички условия за това. Масата можем при това да оставим настрана – нейната психология е съвсем друга – и да се ограничим с интелигенцията. Има ли тя какво-годе съзнание за длъжност спрямо нещо общо, колективно – в своето понятие може би абстрактно, но в своето битие досущ конкретно? Проявила ли е тя досега един-единствен път такова съзнание, извършила ли е по внушение на своите собствени чувства и убеждения едно колективно, социално или интелектуално действие? Не говорим за отделни единици; не твърдим, че няма хора с най-дълбок и искрен алтруизъм; но твърдим, че и тия най-добри единици никога не са образували едно живо, органическо цяло, *един* индивидуум (Author’s italics; Dr. Krŭstev 1898, 95-6).

The notion of high culture articulated by the Bulgarian modernists was predicated on the political ideology of liberal democracy (Genchev 1991, 287-89; Iordanov 1993, 43-44). It accommodated the intellectuals' vision of the artist as a new social ideal and a role model to be disseminated among those, who in the view of the intelligentsia, were neither educated nor sophisticated enough to produce national values and ideals tuned to modernity. According to this intelligentsia, this was the majority of the Bulgarian population. Intended as a unifying principle, however, as Elenkov has argued, the idea of 'high' culture – promoting the independence and personal autonomy of each Bulgarian, while arguing above all the right of individuals to define and freely express their identity outside of societal restrictions, outdated norms, etc. – paradoxically became "an experience of social fragmentation" that made possible the cultivation of individualism through a series of "nihilistic" detachments from historical reality, which the modernists had formulated (Elenkov 1998, 59). The promulgation of modernist aesthetics, which affirmed that the absolute moment of internal freedom and true individual existence was achieved only by way of intense aesthetic pleasure, became a vital part of this process (Elenkov 1998, 59).

The modernists persistently restated this idea, especially when assessing the derogatory effects of the 'mass' culture popularized and instilled by the state. In this context, Slaveikov's struggle to secure the autonomy of the National Theatre, which consumed most of his time as a director before he was fired and left the country in 1912, is exemplary of the type of agitation the modernists employed in their culture-building and culture-promotion activities (Slaveikov 1959, 268-301; 345-46). It is noteworthy that the distinction they made between 'high' and 'low' culture, also reflected in the cleavage between the Intelligentsia and the 'People,' developed into a key point of the Bulgarian creative intelligentsia's demands for political reforms. Slaveikov, for example, explicitly stated in his article "*Natsionalen teatŭr*" (National Theatre): "Everywhere around the world the autonomy of artists is achieved through struggle and sacrifices […]" (Slaveikov 1959, 268; 345-46). I will discuss this aspect of Bulgarian modernism in the next section. Suffice it to note here that Slaveikov's understanding of true democracy, for instance, was underpinned by his conviction that the autonomy of the artistic field was crucial for the realization of the liberal-democratic model (Slaveikov 1959, 332-347). Any other social and political ideology the modernist rejected as a form of "cheap populism" (*evtin demokratizm*; qt. in Iliev 1992, 59).

Iavorov voiced similar views, although more poetically. In his posthumously published fragment, "*Geniiat niama vŭzrast i narodnost*" (The Genius Is Ageless And Stateless), he confessed that the Bulgarian intelligent impregnated with the modern sensitivity, remained "alienated from his social environment and from those for whom he carries the cross to Golgotha" (*vsiakoga samot[en] i chuzhd, sred koito zhivee i za koito nosi kŭm Golgota svoia krŭst*; Iavorov n. d., 69). Despite that in his heart, the artist with patriotic nostalgia "craves" closeness to his society, in quest of a "bosom" and a "homeland," he is always lonely and estranged. The implication is clear, for Iavorov indeed perceived the artistic intelligent as separate from, and superior to 'the masses.' Iavorov hastens to add that the intellectual, possessing "an inborn longing for the sky and the eternal, the realm from which he had come […] is without a family (*bezroden*) and without a state (*bezotechestven*), searching for a motherland (*rodina*) […] always imagining and living in the world of his illusions" (*khimerite na zhivota i sredata*; Iavorov n. d., 69). The nation thus emerges as a utopian realm of harmony, peace and beauty.

Particularly visible that is, as Elenkov points out, in the intellectual articulation of the nation communicated after the defeat of the Bulgarian political nationalism in the World War I, when the artistic intelligentsia agitated for identification with the 'imaginary' national space depicted in the writings of the Symbolists, wherein the experience of Bulgarianness was symbolically integrated, continuous and whole (Elenkov 1998, 71). The imagined nation was contrasted henceforth with the real nation. The opposition took the form of a new semiotic twist that recharged the conventional notion of motherland (*rodina*) with fresh connotations. In contrast to the previously endorsed fatherland (*otechestvo*, a masculine noun), the term *rodina* (a feminine noun) now was established as an acceptable public symbol of national identification (K'orchev 1907, 160-61). Together with the Balkan (mountain), *rodina* (motherland, homeland) was essentialized as the embodiment of Bulgarian cultural history in space and time, thus situating the ethnic community within a mytho-poetic rather than a concrete geographical realm. Galin Tikhanov has discussed the significance of this act. This Bulgarian literary critic suggests that:

> […] The 'native' is no longer necessarily conceptualized as 'Bulgarian'; this incongruence [of native and Bulgarian] results from the expanded meaning of the idea of homeland (*rodina*). From a specific and limited territory, a product of a stable patriotic attachment that generated the images of collective identification, the homeland (*rodina*) is transformed into an ideal [immaterial] substance, materializing only through the efforts of the individual to search for it and attain it, respectively eroding rather than achieving collective identification. The homeland thus becomes the individual's destiny. […] One is not born into a nation, but gives birth to the nation within 'the self'.[37]

For instance, K'orchev proclaimed that the homeland (*rodina*) was everywhere, contained in the "shining stars and the cloudy sky, the green forest and the rocky desert, within [one's] friend and the eyes of his dog, the rose in the garden and the spider weaving his web in the corner of the room, which all hold bits of mortality and immortality […]."[38] His effort to erase all associations with concrete geographical *topoi*, an intellectual practice that Slaveikov also frequently utilized,

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[37] […] родното не е вече непременно българското; тяхното несъвпадане е свързано с разширения и променен обем на понятието за родина. От земя, 'в някои предели,' продукт на една устойчива сетивност, произвеждаща образи на колективното идентифициране, родината сега става духовна субстанция, резултат на идивидуално търсене и постигане, по-скоро подриващо, отколкото постигащо колективната идентификация. Родината се превръща в индивидуална участ. […] Вече не човекът е в родината, а родината е в личността (1994, 131-32).

[38] Родината е всъде: ясните звезди и затъмненият от облаците свод, зелената гора и каменистата пустош, приятелят ви и очите на неговото куче, розата в

> […] could be explained as a consequence of the actual infeasibility of accomplishing the geographical ideal – the unification of all Bulgarians inhabiting the Balkan Peninsula into a single territory. The waning of this ideal was as much an outcome of the historical circumstances (actual political decisions, participation in the wars, the national catastrophes) as it was a result of the psychological uncertainty and skepticism that the modernist 'cultural universalism' [rooted cosmopolitanism] provoked.[39]

Part of this complex of semantic or rather semiotic transformations which reflected the social changes occurring in Bulgaria, constituted the formulation by the modernists of another boundary signaling ambivalence with respect to their current reality. This was the distinction between the city and the village, conceptualized as two separate habitats of modernity. In addition to the divide between the intelligentsia and the 'People,' this binary opposition was employed as a metaphor conveying social tensions and inequalities that the progressive intellectuals considered imperative to articulate in the process of re-forming the nation. Above all, they used it to affirm once again their status as cultural leaders and to claim authority over the production of the nation's 'symbolic,' i.e., cultural capital. On the other hand, they projected their frustration and disagreement with official policies of nationalism that imparted a rather incomplete version of group identity by extolling the 'demotic' concept of the nation. In this respect, the boundary served them to dispose of previous models of self-identification and to formulate new objectives for the Bulgarian national movement.

градината и паякът в ъгъла на стаята – всичко е носител на къс от вечността и смъртта […] (K'orchev 1907, 160).

[39] Загубата на българското в неговата веществена сигурност – този специфичен рефлекс може да се обясни като следствие от реалното неосъществяване на 'географския идеал' – постигането на териториално обединение на всички българи живеещи на Балканския полуостров. Угасването на този блян, е резултат, колкото на исторически стекли се обстоятелства (реални политически решения, участие във Войните, национални катастрофи), толкова и на психологическо раздвоение и недоверие родило се с модернистичното съзнание за 'културен универсализъм' (Tikhanov 1994, 131-32).

One of the most interesting discussions addressing the relationship between the city and the village, symbolically reinforcing the awareness of their distinction, is the article "*Bŭlgarskata natsionalna dusha*" (The Bulgarian National Soul) by one Mois Benaroia (1996).[40] In his discourse, the Bulgarian intellectual refused to see the city and the village as similar in terms of their role as containers of modernity. Criticizing typical conceptualizations of their relationship, Benaroia renounced the mainstream tendency of Bulgarian literature to identify Bulgarian peasantry as the 'People,' focusing exclusively on portraying their lifestyle and problems. The Bulgarian city, in his view, more often than not had been disregarded as an artistic object because "being a product of foreign influences," its urbanized culture was seen insufficient to generate representations of the typical Bulgarian life (Benaroia 1996, 179). Having the awareness of a true patriot, this critic thus reacted with annoyance to previous conceptualizations of the nation (including those formulated by the early Bulgarian modernists) that sought the real meaning of Bulgarianness in the 'village' and among the peasants. He insisted that the essence of Bulgarianness was not to be found in the material existence (*bit*) and its ethnographically accurate (realistic) or romanticized (idealized) aesthetic renderings, therefore demeaning the significance of both Vazov's and Slaveikov's approaches. Instead, Benaroia favored a symbolical method that above all endeavored to represent the "eternal soul" of the nation (1996, 179). In any case, the critic emphasized, the ethnographic elements, especially Vazov's precise portrayals of Bulgarian peasants in the context of their every day life, could be interpreted only as "records of Bulgarian people's backwardness" and their fascination with "the progress of the advanced world" (1996, 179); the village itself then turned into a spatial metaphor indicating such backwardness regardless of the authorial intention invested in it.

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[40] The original date of publication is unknown; page citations refer to the reprint in *Literaturnata zadruga "Hiperion,"* edited by Stoian Vasilev (Veliko Tŭrnovo: Slovo, 1996).

On the other hand, argued Benaroia, the large urban centers possessed a distinctive culture that reflected the modernization and Westernization of Bulgarian society. Although the city stood out neither as a chief economic nor most dominant social attribute of Bulgarian society, the culture and diverse lifestyles it encompassed, characterize it as one of the most significant factors propelling the progress of the Bulgarian nation (Benaroia 1996, 180). He interpreted 'the city' as a symbol of modernity, endowing the notion with a number of positive connotations by means of which the metaphor started to function also as a sign of change and advancement. "The specifics of the new social and economic conditions," wrote Benaroia, "are revealed in the intensification and growing significance" of urban life as a contemporary condition that obliterates the patriarchal foundations of the Bulgarian nation. On these grounds, he agitated for a different model of national identification, one that recognized the power of urban (high) culture to raise the individual to a new understanding of her relation with the nation. In other words, Benaroia's discourse celebrates the diversity and pluralistic nature of urban life and culture, recognizing that different interests could engender conflicts and disagreements between the intellectuals. Thus, he proclaimed the clashes with the older generations as "natural," pointing to the fact that such conflicts gave birth to pluralism, which in contrast to the uniformity and conformity of the 'village' (traditional) life, reflected adequately the rhythm of the modern times to which the younger generations of Bulgarian intelligentsia were prone to respond (Benaroia 1996, 180-81).

The critic gave credit to the eclectic nature of Bulgarian modernism, viewing it as an intellectual reaction to a reality that "had not completely adjusted to West European big-business" (*v nesprisposobilata se oshte kŭm edriia kapitalizŭm Bŭlgaria*). He maintained that this was "a typical feature of 'belated' nations, whose modernization was triggered by negation" (*otritsanie*; Benaroia 1996, 181). In the quest for adequate models to express the polyphony of voices in Bulgarian national culture, Benaroia offered an interesting re-arrangement of the literary canon, declaring that the true essence of Bulgarianness one could discover in the lyrical ponderings of the Bulgarian patriotic intelligentsia rather than in the best prose-works it created (1996, 191). Respectively, he paid tribute to Khristo Botev, Pencho Slaveikov, and Teodor Traianov as artists, who marked three distinctive stages in the evolution of the "Bulgarian national soul." Benaroia preferred the symbolist Traianov, for as he put it, "[this poet] lives through the destiny of the nation, surmounting the duality of Bulgarian existence, incarnating the national ideas of love, goodness, enlightenment, and predestined suffering." Traianov's poetry demonstrated that by moving through these phases, "the synchronization of life with the rhythm of the universe is achieved, thus giving meaning to the earthly existence; the new Bulgarian therein is born."[41]

The divide between the intelligentsia and the 'people,' thus started to function as an indicator of the new social tensions that the modernization brought forth, therefore signaling the transformation of traditional society. As a result, the modernists found it effective in symbolizing the occurring restructuring and diversification of relationships within the Bulgarian space. For them, this was an important strategy of distinction because it eliminated traditional confusions about the status of the intelligentsia, which the older generation conceptualized as being 'born' out of the peasant mass and thus, insisted on its subordination to the 'people,' agitating for social service in the name of the 'people' that required from the intellectuals to become 'one with the masses.' Contrary to this view, which the realists and populists shared with the writers of proletarian literature, the modernists insisted on recognizing the right of the individual to have a mind of her own and more importantly, to criticize both 'the masses' and the state. For example, Benaroia while recognizing the need for closeness between the intelligentsia and the 'people' also campaigned for the intellectuals' disinterest in popular (common) ideals, arguing that this would give the intelligentsia the privilege "to criticize the masses." Such criticism, however, in order to be useful "has to be constructive and spring from [the intelligentsia's] deep love for the people" (1996, 191).

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[41] Теодор Траянов изживява съдбата на народа, превъзмогва двойнствеността на българското битие и въплотява неговите идеи на обич, добро, светлина и орисано страдание, възвестявайки че в движението на този път се постига висшата хармония на живота, космичния ритъм, който осмисля преходността на земното. Тук се очертава и новия български човек (1996, 190-191).

Benaroia's article is important for it offers a glimpse into the change occurring in the work of the Bulgarian modernist social imagination. The tone of his words differs from that of the early modernists in being less aggressive and militant when defending the right of intellectuals to participate in the shaping of the nation's historical fate. One senses in his position an attempt to cope with the depressing reality of a growing political repression, economic and social instability that resulted from the decisions made by the ruling political elite, a shift that fully manifested itself only in the mid-1920s. As Elenkov points out, "the wars and their aftermath constitute another critical situation," which the Bulgarian intelligentsia tried to 'control' by intensifying the struggle for cultural regeneration. The debate about the role of the intelligentsia re-opened with a renewed force in the public space after the First World War, when the Bulgarian symbolists and later, expressionists, dadaists, etc. had to assert their right to be the creators of the new social and cultural values. In this context, their prescriptions for changes and proposed new definition of Bulgarian identity fed on a slightly different conceptualization of the relationship between the individual and the nation. They advocated for identification "with the imaginary national space that they saw as the only warrant for the successful mastering of the post-war reality, because it provided solace for the educated and terminated their dismal wandering" (Elenkov 1998, 71). The utopian experience of the nation, as well as the interest in experimenting with Bulgarian oral traditions set the foundation of the cultural program the intellectuals developed in opposition to the state and its militant political nationalism. The key objective of this program remained the formulated by the early modernists need for aligning Bulgarian culture with the West European aesthetic standards of excellence. Thus, in the debates of the 1910s-1920s the issue of westernization and Europeanization re-surfaced, escalating the artistic intelligentsia's angst and distress. The relationship between the center (Europe) and the periphery (Bulgaria) as manifested in the heatedly debated topic about the relationship between the 'native' and the 'foreign' in Bulgarian art and culture became the principle metaphor to express the increasing tensions that further propelled the modernist cultural revolt.

5.5. Creating National Citizens:

The Intelligentsia Against the State

Among the most prominent factors provoking dissatisfaction and discontent with the pace and direction of Bulgarian society's modernization, thus strengthening also the Bulgarian modernists' critical reaction to the extant historical reality, was their 'disempowerment.' As the intellectuals quickly became aware of the limitations the centralizing activities of the ruling administration imposed on their involvement in the political life of the nation-state, they became more fervent in the formulation of an alternative cultural agenda and program of action. This section looks closely at the relationship of the progressive Bulgarian intelligentsia with the nation-state in an attempt to elucidate further the source of Bulgarian modernist practices and ideology, which developed as a form of cultural nationalism that resisted and challenged the power of the political nationalism of the Bulgarian state.

The political and socio-cultural realities in Bulgaria during the first two decades of its independent existence clearly perplexed Bulgarian intellectuals, above all, the cohort of West European oriented artistic intelligentsia, because the state failed to define clearly their purpose in modern society. Consequently, Bulgarian writers, artists, academics and so on – in particular the advocates of modernism and Westernization – felt politically and financially marginalized, held back from active participation in the state building process (Iordanov 1993, 23). Informative in this respect is Boian Penev's article "*Bŭlgarskata inteligentsia*" (Bulgarian Intelligentsia, 1924).[42] His commentary entertains a common motif running as a 'red thread' through the bulk of Bulgarian modernist discourses, namely the disappointment in the way the principle political acts of the state (the Constitution, the ministerial and other administrative regulations) defined the role of the artistic intelligentsia.[43] Among this plethora of critiques, Penev's review-article is worth mentioning because of his lucid and thorough exposition of the problem that also offers a detailed and articulate program of national-cultural revival, illuminating many of the typical modernist ambitions.

To begin with, although Penev's essay opens with a trivial lamentation about the inadequate state of cultural affairs in the Bulgarian nation-state, it proceeds with an unusual twist as the critic shifts his attention to the meticulous examination of the alternatives for national-cultural development. As he acknowledges, Westernization was inevitable because of the overwhelming apathy and deficiency of genuine intellectual resources. The critic clearly indicated the lack of higher pursuits as the "sickness" of the times. "Although we were politically liberated, the end of our spiritual 'oppression' is still unknown. This spiritual 'slavery' is more dangerous than any political tyranny because we cannot rely on others to free us from it. We have to do it ourselves. We have to become a Great Power. But where are the efforts?"[44]

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[42] Page citations refer to the reprint in Elenkov and Daskalov 1994, 131-144.

[43] To point but a few: Dr. Krŭstev 1889, Slaveikov 1906, Debelianov 1912, Mikhailovski 1924, Milev, G. 1924, Gŭlŭbov 1927b, and so on.

[44] Политически се освободихме, но краят на духовното ни робство още не се вижда. Второто робство е много по-страшно от политическото. Он него никоч външна сила не ще ни освободи – ние сами трябва да се освободим, сами за себе си да станем Велика сила. Но де са усилията? (Penev 1924, 132).

Then, the intellectual proclaims that "heightened [social] awareness, unison, and will" were the qualities the Bulgarian intelligentsia needed to cultivate in order to secure the fulfillment of the cultural ideal: the creation of a coherent and strong Bulgarian nation (Penev 1924, 132). As he wrote: "Bulgarian society is familiar with hostility, pusillanimity and indifference but had never experienced the powerful creative rhythm of a single harmonizing collective will."[45] Therefore, he suggested that the progressive Bulgarian intellectuals have to seek inspiration in foreign models and imported cultural 'goods' in order to produce the high national Bulgarian culture they aspired. Penev was adamant about the need for high national culture, insisting that it was the most vital factor in the revival of the Bulgarian spiritual and intellectual potential (1924, 132). In his cultural vision, France was the country of choice because, as the critic argued, it was the single European state that had a well-developed sense of social solidarity and cohesiveness (Penev 1924, 133). Allow me to cite here a passage from his discourse that finely illustrates the intention of his argument. In the critic's view,

> The Frenchman is civil and polite. […] His superbly tuned social instincts turn him effortlessly into a cosmopolitan, who defends and lives by universal humanistic values. His sole ambition is to serve mankind. […] He is well disposed to Otherness as well as to his native [culture], equally open-minded and tolerant to [cultural differences]. […] Unlike the Englishmen and the Germans, the French are not haughty and treat 'smaller' nations with respect. […]
>
> The most important feature of the French national character, however, is the spiritual maturity and wealth that is expressed in the constant, unlimited, creative imagination and the fine aesthetic taste. Such spiritual wealth is predicated on a synthetic mind and an uninhibited imagination, which the Bulgarians unfortunately do not possess, for they are too serious and crude to develop it.[46]

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[45] Българското общество познава враждата, познава малодушието и равнодушието – но не и творческия ритъм на една хармонична колективна воля (Penev 1924, 132).

[46] Французинът е в най-добрия смисъл на думата, обществен и светски човек. [...] Неговото социално чувство го издига до космополитизъм, до

Apparently, the intellectual put an emphasis on the concept of 'civil society' interpreted in the light of the French 'civic' nationalism and in the framework of a liberal-democratic ideology, which respected the infringed rights and freedoms of the individual. His anti-governmental critique, although subtle, targeted the state disinterest in the contribution and participation of intellectuals as *citizens* and therefore, was elaborated from the perspective that the state political nationalism was exhausted or rather insufficient in providing models for further development. It indirectly implied the ambition of Bulgarian modernists to transform the Bulgarian nation into a civil society, guarding with fervor and unreserved patriotic devotion the originality and uniqueness of its culture. Thus, Penev suggested that the core and unifying principle of this civil society was not the state, but the national culture, which thus becomes the most important constituent of Bulgarian collective identity. Since [the intelligentsia] was politically marginalized and had no power to enforce in this "god-forsaken and remote territory" the necessary changes, "it is imperative," advocated the critic, "to create our distinctive national culture" (Penev 1924, 133; see also Zlatarov 1926, Gŭlŭbov 1926c, Iankov 1927, and Krŭstev, K. 1927).

It seems that, Penev featured the debate about the function and purpose of the Bulgarian intelligentsia as a key to the solution of many internal conflicts. He indicated the Bulgarian intellectuals' growing belief in the need for finding alternatives to the authority of the political elite, hence endorsing also a new

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общочовечност и универсалност на духа. Голямата негова амбиция е да – да върши делото на цялото човечество. [...] Към околното и далечното той е еднакво приветлив, открит, отзивчив, лесно възбудим. [...] Чужда му е оная надменност, която отличава англичани и немци – особено в отношенията им към едно по-долно съсловие или народност, не по своя вина изостанала назад в духовното си развитие.

[…] Но това, в което се крие чарът на тоя народ и неговата поезия, то е духовитостта – специфичната френска дъховитост. В нея французинът най-завършено проявява своя гений, неуморната си творческа фантазия, своята безкрайна изобретателност. Духовитостта предполага не само синтетичен ум, но и силно въображение. Едва ли ще я притежаваме някога. Много сме сурови и сурови за нея (Penev 1924, 139-140).

type of power relations and collective identity (Elenkov 1998, 73; see also Gŭlŭbov 1927b). For instance, in his essay, Penev explicitly declared that the state cared little for the development of culture (1924, 132). In order to drive this point home, he utilized the center-periphery metaphor. In his text, it served as a chief rhetorical tool with multiple functions. Talking about the "quiet daily tragedy of the Bulgarian intelligentsia" (*tikhata tragediia na bŭlgarskata inteligentsiia*), stuck in the "province" where the social milieu simply stifled its ambitions and hardly allowed one to escape from "the rust of Bulgarian provincialism" (Penev 1924, 132), the critic revamped the distinction between the city and the village made earlier by the first modernists. By deftly exploiting the spatial relationship between the capital Sofia (center) and the province (periphery), he conveyed the catastrophic consequences of the governmental indifference to the problems of the intelligentsia and Bulgarian national culture. "It is sad that until this day, Sofia is the only cultural center we have. Every one wants to be here. Not so much for the culture: what kind of culture does Sofia have? Every one comes here not to create, but to be engrossed in the scum of everyday life."[47]

Penev insisted that the reason behind the deteriorating state of the creative intelligentsia, and by extension, of Bulgarian national culture, was the failure "for so long to establish another cultural center [different from the capital], even if smaller in size." As the critic sadly notes, "nobody cares for that, neither the state nor the society."[48] What essentially the patriotic intellectual challenged here was the integrative power of the culture promoted by the state, which of course, he interpreted as a popular culture – a second-rate standardized enterprise that had little real value (Penev 1924, 132). Thus, he used the center-periphery metaphor to express the modernist resistance to mass culture, revealing also the Bulgarian intelligentsia's desire to overcome its marginality, and create a powerful center that would attract large and diverse populations to identify with the rich and varied national high culture (Penev 1924, 133). In this sense, his critique also aimed at strengthening the prestige of Bulgarian cultural and national identity.

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[47] Печалното е, че и до ден-днешен ние останахме с един-единствен център на духовен живот – София. Всичко се стеми тук. Не толкова за културата – каква е културата на София? Не за да създава, а за да бъде увлечено в пяната на общия поток (Penev 1924, 132).

[48] За толкова години ние не успяхме да създадеме друг, макар и по-малък, духовен център. Никой не полага грижа за това – нито държава, нито общество (Penev 1924, 132).

Penev's discussion operated with two different notions of peripherality. On the one hand, he mobilized what Fernandez has aptly phrased "peripheral wisdom" (2000, 117-144), thus affirming within the local national-historical space the centrality of the high culture that the modernists labored to create. "The situation," the critic wrote, "would have been very different if our youth was raised to follow [the principles] of an authentic cultural ideology [that would provide the framework for collective actions] as this is the case in countries that have produced a distinctive national high culture."[49] Penev continued by posing a crucial rhetorical question, to which he thoroughly responded in the second part of his discourse: "Which way should we direct our efforts – to which country, to which culture?"[50]

Extensively analyzing the variety of influences coming from Europe and Russia, the intellectual concluded that the single solution was to synthesize all intellectual imports from the advanced European nations, in the process adapting and transforming these so that they befit the "national soul" (Penev 1924, 143). He strongly emphasized that while borrowing intellectual and cultural goods from other European nations, Bulgarian intellectuals ought to be careful to "take only significant constituents that are useful to us" (ibid.). On this basis, Penev identified the ideal goal of such cultural exchange to be

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[49] Съвсем друго би било, ако нашите младежи бяха възпитаници на една домашна школа, както това бива в страни, които са създали по-висока национална, самобитна култура (Penev 1924, 133).

[50] Де трябва да насочим усилията си – към коя страна, към коя култура? (Penev 1924, 136).

> [...] the matching of German pragmatism, diligence, and profound philosophical thought with the lively French style in order to tame the crude Bulgarian skepticism by injecting in it some of the Russian moral idealism so that we can conquer our dry didacticism and cultivate a freely flowing imagination like the Englishman, simultaneously ennobling and reformulating our limited individualism according to the experience of the open-minded and universalistic in spirit French.[51]

The implications of this statement are significant and I will touch upon it again later. Suffice it to say here that Penev communicated a set of particular qualities, which in his view portrayed the desired 'civility' of the Bulgarian people and eventually presented values that modern art and literature would take as its responsibility to describe and instill.

Penev also pointed to the need for re-establishing the frontier with Europe. He reified Europe as a civilizing center and a significant *Other* in relation to which Bulgarian national identity were to be defined. In principle, he viewed Europe as a beneficial source of cultural blueprints, nonetheless manifesting acute critical awareness of the many pitfalls the closeness to it involved. For example, while arguing the advantages of importing cultural 'goods' from Germany, Penev pointed out that "the famous German determination" was a double-edged sword, for as the critic contended, "this determination sometimes turns into a blind, mechanistic force [...] [that bespeaks too much premeditation] resulting in a sluggish mindset: slow thought, slow responses, controlled impulsivity."[52] Similar negative comments Penev made for all European nations, clearly manifesting his guarded and selective attitude to the various European influences.[53]

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[51] [...] да примирим в себе си немската предметност, добросъвестността и гльбината на немската мисъл с живия френски стил, да противопоставим руския нравствен идеализъм на грубата българска практичност, да победим сухия догматизъм със свободните форми на английското творчество, да осмислим и облагородим нашия ограничен индивидуализъм с широката общественост и универсалния дух на Франция (Penev 1924, 143).

[52] [...] Понякога волята им се превръща в сляпа, механическа сила – у нас по-често. Мудна психика: бавно мислене, бавно реагиране, овладяна вътрешна

In any case, what is important to stress is that Penev's discussion shows that the late modernists manipulated the center-periphery relationship as a transparent 'spatial code' to communicate the felt need for cultural and social reforms (1924, 132). In short, the critic used this spatial code in reference "to a set of meanings carried by physical relationships in space, specifically by closeness ('proximity' [...]) and distance" (cf. Hodge and Kress 1988, 52), which the early modernists had established already. In this sense, the center-periphery metaphor and the meanings associated with it operated within a particular semantic net that provided the context for the code's interpretation. Endowed with inherent ambiguity,[54] Penev uses it as a key intellectual tool for elaborating a complicated anti-governmental critique, making also more apparent the need for redrawing the boundary with Europe by introducing a more positive image of the Bulgarian society as an equal partner in the international cultural exchange.

The growing confidence of Bulgarian intellectuals in the value of their own culture is clearly expressed by Geo Milev, who as a student in Germany wrote a number of letters published in the Bulgarian press under the title "*Literatruno-khudozhestveni pisma ot Germania*" (Literary-Artistic Letters From Germany, 1913-14). Here the patriot recorded his observations during his stay in Germany, noting both the positive and the negative aspects in the German cultural lifestyle and mentality. The same impressions, but in a more

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страст (Penev 1924, 137).

[53] Again, Penev was not the only one who clearly saw the danger of unguarded adoption and thoughtless mimicking of foreign models. Similar thoughts expressed also Sheitanov (1923-26), Gŭlŭbov (1926c), Iliev, At. (1926a), and many other intellectuals.

[54] Cf. Hodge and Kress' statement that "closeness, on its own carries a contradiction. It is a strongly ambiguous sign that is only disambiguated if there are other reasons or sings which control interpretation" (1988, 53).

intimate note, Milev also conveyed in letters to his father. In the correspondence he sent from various European cities, the youth expressed both his disappointment with the West, and his fervent patriotism. For example, in a letter sent from Leipzig, he stated: "This is what I learned abroad. We should stop thinking that only the West has great cultural accomplishments while our culture is [inferior and unoriginal]. No! No! […] We also have great works, and great people, and great professors, and great actors, and great poets. At least, I find the West, as represented in Germany, to be not so impressive."[55] His native land, despite a critical attitude toward the political and social reality there, emerges in his writings as the catalyst needed to stimulate the internalization of everything he had learned. The changes occurring in the young Bulgarian, concerning his growing critical awareness toward the advancements of the West were documented in another letter to his father, sent from London on September 21, 1914. Let me cite from it here:

> American pragmatism, materialism, the interest in practical aspects of life, technology, business, finances, and so on, should be outlawed in Europe, the Old civilization, where, as Nietzsche has said, people must strive to be *humans* […] and good Europeans. […]
>
> As you see, the boldness of my thoughts is extreme. This means that the ideas raging in my mind today are not a logical consequence of my maturation, as you reminded me in a recent letter, but something extraordinary that only geniuses bear. For I am, also an 'egotist' but one with a greater altruism than all altruists in the world; I have to accept myself as I am, a unique mind that in the language of the masses equals genius. Yes! One, who is capable of rising above the mass, the mass of [Western] professors and philosophers, the mass that fills and continues to fill the precipices of the world!
>
> Oh, I wish I could return to the innocent time when I craved to hear their precious words […] I listened to them and diligently copied their wisdom. Today I say: "Burn it!!"[56]

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[55] Това ме научи чужбината, че не трябва да се мисли че само на Запад има хубави работи, а ний сме още на долния басамак. Не, не! И у нас има велики работи, и велик народ, и велики професори, и велики актьори, и велики поети. Поне гремаският запад не е нещо особено (Milev, G. 1964, 24).

[56] Американизмът, материалната наука, практичното, физичното, машинарийството, техниката, и пр. и пр. – с една дума "американщината" – тя

Milev’s dramatic gesture is an expression of his ambivalent attitude towards Europe and is typical in a sense, for it shows the difficulty of outgrowing the regular for Bulgarian intellectuals naïve exaltation of European centrality. Boldly facing his sense of inferiority, Milev consciously formed a more critical position, thus becoming more selective in what he accepted and what he found objectionable in European influences. The letter, therefore, reveals the intensity of the inner struggle he had to experience as a young patriot living abroad. It ends on a strong patriotic note, demonstrating Milev’s cultural optimism nurtured by his awareness of being a Bulgarian-European:

> I live at 19 Gordon Street, W.C. London.
>
> This is my room: a cupboard, a bed, a sink, a table, and on top of it, a pile of thick and slim volumes, over which I am bent with my thoughts and my fear […] But you must not worry. You have to be cheerful, totally happy; as happy as I am [because] I am absolutely healthy, healthy; above my head are only the stars; there is a big sun on the sheet where I write: this is my fear! But I am fearless and you should be happy … .[57]

трябва да се изгони от Европа, Стария свят, където хората трябва да бъдат човеци и – както казва Ницше, [...] “добри европейци.”

[...] Виждаш, че смелостта на идеите ми отива до крайност. А това значи, че идеите, които бучат днес в главата ми, не са обикновено редовно следствие от възрастта ми – както ми бе писал напоследък в Лайпциг, - а нещо по-друго от обикновеното , нещо което се върти само е единични глави. Защото аз – тоже един ‘егоист’ с много по-голям обаче алтруизъм от всичките алтруисти, сбрани в един кош, - защото аз не мога да гледам на себе си като на единична глава. С езика на сганта: гений: да: гений е всеки, който може да се издигне един пръст над тази тълпа, тълпата на професори и философи, тълпата, която е пълнила и пълни пропастите на земята.

Ах, де е блаженото време, когато жаднеехме да чуем златните уста на тия – благословен бог наш! – на тия: професори. Изслушах ги, писах им доскоро лекциите; днес обаче: дайте газ и кибрит!! (Milev, G. 1964, 255).

[57] Аз живея на: 19 Gordon street, W.C. London. Тук е моята стая: един шкаф, едно легло, един умивалник, една маса, върху нея цял ред дебели книги и върху нея тоже – аз с моите мисли: с моя страх [...]. Но – вий няма защо да се боите, вий не сте длъжни да се боите. Вий можете да бъдете съвем весели, тъй весели, както и аз: да, аз съм съвсем здрав, съвсем здрав; над главата ми звезди и върху листа, на който пиша – едно огромно слънце: моят страх! Но аз съм безстрашен и вий трябва да бъдете весели ... (Milev, G. 1964, 256-257).

On the one hand, then, while substituting the 'city-village' dichotomy that in earlier modernist conceptualizations signified Bulgarian society's 'backwardness,' the center-periphery opposition was used by Penev and other Bulgarian intellectuals from the 1920s to subdue some of the spatial metaphor's most embarrassing implications. Through a skillful code-changing invention (cf. Eco 1979, 245-261), which I will refrain from exploring here, the previously accepted interpretations were rendered as 'introspective stereotypes' that could be manipulated as means of generating a sense of closeness and exclusivity, conveying at once the Bulgarian intellectuals' superior position in relation to the 'people' that were still perceived as insufficiently Europeanized. In this manner, the metaphor was used to emphasize the effort of Bulgarian intellectuals to propel the struggle for recognition of their cultural leadership rights.

On the other hand, the center-periphery metaphor was also manipulated with the intention to meet ends analogous to the ones pursued by the Ukrainian modernists: to increase the symbolical value of the national high culture and thus, to accelerate the process of national consolidation by transforming the 'people' into a society of modern citizens. It is in this context that the center-periphery relationship habitually started to accommodate also an implicit or explicit comparison with Western Europe, which the modernists in both locales hesitantly construed as a 'superior' civilizing center and an originator of modernizing 'offensives' they both feared and loved.[58]

The crux of Penev's argument was also typically modernist in the sense that he underscored the urgency of political acculturation whereby the intelligentsia internalized the ideals of West European liberal individualism and democracy, advocating the creation of a culturally advanced civil society which recognized the priority of the collective without restricting and violating individuals' sacrosanct rights. Thus, the critic suggested that Bulgarian intellectuals would benefit from sharpening their social instincts to resemble French intellectuals, championing respectively a more engaged and active participation in the country's political and social life.

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[58] Interesting thoughts shared with his audience Atanas Iliev, who in 1926 wrote: "The representatives of West European culture are no longer accepted as the supreme authority, whose opinions we have to repeat. No! Western European culture ought to be experienced as our own; it should be modified, recreated and further elaborated by us" (Представителите на западноевропейската култура не са вече абсолютни авторитети, чиито мнения трябва само да се повтарят. Не! Западноевропейската култура трябва да бъде изживяна като наша собствена; тя трябва да се приспособява, продължава и дотворява от самите нас [1926a, 104; page citations refer to the reprint in Vasilev 1995, 103-106]).

He clearly stated that the intellectuals had to learn to criticize the ruling administration and pursue their own ideals, becoming therefore the spiritual (cultural) leadership of the nation in opposition to the current political elite. "Presently, we need those individuals who are mentally and spiritually strong and resilient – self-confident, yet aware of others' needs, knowing who they are and who they should be – to develop a critical attitude towards our reality, a critical attitude that is not passive but active."[59] Partly, this cultivated criticism fed on the intelligentsia's knowledge of how to interpret and modify imported foreign ideas and models so that these would naturally enter national life, thereby achieving an "ideal blending of foreign and native." Professor Penev and many of his contemporaries saw this principle as a promise for the success of the modernization project (1924, 143). For example, Atanas Iliev referred to this principle as "the organic bond between foreign and native" (*organicheska vrŭzka mezhdu rodnoto i chuzhdoto*; 1926a, 103). The artist thus declared: "[…] We have to reach the foreign through a profound understanding of the Bulgarian. Then, we could create something original and new, which is the offspring of the Bulgarian soul. Then, we could claim our contribution to the global cultural progress."[60]

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[59] Тъй че, днес за днес, остават да ръководят духовното равитие по-силните, по-устойчивите характери – тия които имат съзнание и за себе си, и за другите и знаят какво са и какво трябва да бъдат – и се отнасят критично към българската действителност – отнасят се при това не с пасивна, а с активна критика (Penev 1924, 132).

[60] [...] чуждото трябва да се постигне по пътя на едно вдълбочаване в родното. Само тогава бихме могли да дадем нещо ново, което е рожба на

Penev's response to the question he posed is also typically modernist because he treated the closeness to Europe with a sound dose of skepticism and at times, even cynicism. This allowed him to present his cultural program as 'objective' while at the same time unfailing in his promotion of the Bulgarian West European oriented intelligentsia's specific interests. As a result, in spite of the anxiety caused by the perception of European centrality and Bulgarian peripherality, the cultural agenda he and alike-minded intellectuals pursued set standards of national identification in opposition to official formulations, by endorsing a type of collective identity that clearly sustained its link with Slaveikov's and Dr. Krŭstev's individualistic nationalism. Accordingly, the maintenance of the ambivalent relationship with Europe was important for the late modernists since it allowed them to articulate successfully a competing definition of the nation. The essence of this new definition Konstantin Gŭlŭbov had aptly put as exchange with West European culture that leads to a revised notion of 'native culture' and the purging from it of all self-colonizing overtones in an attempt to create an extremely positive image of Bulgarian-ness (1926c, 84).[61]

Anthony Smith (1998) has explained the significance of this act. He, in agreement with John Hutchinson, argues that cultural nationalism develops in a peculiar relation to political nationalism, gaining power from the latter's

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българския дух; само тогава бихме могли да внесем своето в общия културен прогрес (Iliev At., 1926a, 103).

[61] Cf. also Atanas Iliev's statement that Bulgarian art up to this point had managed to present a superficial expression of Bulgarian reality, thus failing to convey "the sacred depths of the national soul [psyche]" (*sŭkrovenite dŭlbini na bŭlgarskata dusha*; 1926a, 103). In addition, the influences coming from Western Europe had "touched the soul of the Bulgarian intellectual" too sketchily, without causing a profound change. "The reason for this," argued the critic, "is the superficial attitude toward the local historical conditions where the foreign can be absorbed only by people, who have a complete understanding of their native 'self' " (Културните влияния от Западна Европа [...] досега са облъхвали българския творец, без да проникнат в дълбочината на душата му. Причината за това трябва да бъде дирена пак в повърхностното отнасяне към българската действителност. Защото чуждото може да бъде оползотворено само от онзи, който преди всичко познава себе си [Iliev, At. 1926a, 103]).

perceived or real failures, always aiming at remedying the resulting mishaps in a quest for achieving further integration of the community in crisis by propagating a wide-ranged cultural program that seeks its moral rebirth (Smith 1998, 177). Both contemporary theorists underscore that for cultural nationalists "the state is accidental" since they recognize the essence of the nation to be "its distinctive civilization, [...] seen as the product of a unique history, culture, and geographical profile" (Hutchinson, qt. in Smith 1998, 177). Consequently, cultural nationalists start conceptualizing the nation as "a primordial expression of the individuality and the creative force of nature. Like families, nations [in their view] are natural solidarities, evolving in the manner of organic beings and living personalities. Hence, the aim of cultural nationalism is always integrative: it is a movement of moral regeneration which seeks to re-unite the different aspects of the nation [...] by returning to the creative life-principle of the nation" (Smith 1998, 178).

Since tensions between the competing definitions of the nation are usually resolved "by trial and error during interaction with other communities" (Smith 1998, 178), the reiterated ambivalent relationship with Europe was important for the Bulgarian modernists because it assisted them in promoting and institutionalizing their version of national identity in distinction from the rest of competing definitions. Thus, the late modernists while following in the steps of their forerunners, operated with a slightly modified definition of Bulgarianness that supported their revision of the concept of nation. In fact, due to the changes brought about by the processes of state construction, the modernist definition of nation acquired specific characteristics: the nation became reinvented time and again as new artistic trends articulated their claims for superiority and cultural leadership. The principle point I want to make here is that modernist national ideology was formulated in double resistance to the centralizing efforts of the state and the influence of the realist-populist-proletarian coalition to foster the spread of mass culture based on the invented 'folk' or 'traditional Bulgarian culture' (Mutafov 1927, Gŭlŭbov 1926c, 1927d). In this sense, Bulgarian modernism was a profoundly ideological movement, becoming a form of political reaction to the unresolved national issue and the perceived governmental incapacity to tackle the creation of a national high culture. According to Iordanov, at the heart of Bulgarian modernism lay a subversive social ideology, similar to the socialist and communist doctrine, which inspired many Bulgarian intellectuals in the early 20th century to look for alternative social-political ideals. It clearly expressed displeasure with the state social-political solutions and disapproval of the forms in which modern Bulgarian society had established itself (Iordanov 1993, 41).

As the cleavage between the ruling political elite and the artistic intelligentsia deepened, and the attempts of the state to control the activities of the intellectuals increased,[62] the struggle of the intellectual elite to gain political and social rights became more explicit.[63] The conflict with the state administration reached its first high point in 1906, when the autonomy of the University was suspended and the leading Bulgarian institution of higher learning was closed for a period of six months (Manafova 1987, 39-42). Subsequent clashes between the artistic intelligentsia and the state authorities became even graver, especially after the June 1923 *coup d'état*,[64] and involved illegal arrests, direct and violent political abuse, harassment and dire executions of intellectuals. Here I will point to Geo Milev's death. The renowned Bulgarian expressionist was brutally murdered in 1925 after he published the long-narrative poem *Septemvri* (September), an outstanding expressionist rendering of the September 1923 uprising. His body was found years later in a mass grave near the *Ilientsi* rail station in Sofia.

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[62] The Democratic Party government (1908 – 1911) voted a new Educational Act in 1908, which replaced the old one from 1894. It aimed at enforcing further administrative centralization of both public education and public culture. This act determined the supreme supervisory prerogatives of the Ministry of Education as the only legal agency to implement the state educational and cultural policies (cf. Manafova 1987, 45).

[63] Cf. the series of articles published by Prof. Liubomir Miletich in the newspaper *Den* (Day) between March 1911 and January 1912, in which he urged for the revision of the 1909 University Act, stressing the necessity to include a special clause guaranteeing the electoral rights of University professors that would allow them to become members of the parliament (qt. in Arnaudov 1939, 327-328).

[64] This event ended the rule of the Agrarian Party and the economic and social reforms attempted by its leader, Aleksandŭr Stamboliiski, who aimed at improving the conditions of the Bulgarian peasantry, instituting the peasants as the most significant social group in the state. The June 1923 *coup d'état* was followed by another violent act, the September 1923 uprising, in which long-lasting tensions and disagreements with the

Under these conditions, Bulgarian modernists voiced their ambitions to transform the Bulgarian people into socially active, independently thinking, self-confident and exceptionally upright citizens, who cherished individual autonomy and human rights as a supreme moral law. The promotion of West European culture therefore became a tool for the institutionalization and propaganda of ideals that stimulated civil responsibility and high personal ethics. Recognizing the importance of high culture as a means to instill the new social values, the modernists campaigned for its development because in their view it was the "creative life-principle" (cf. Smith 1998, 178) that at this particular historical moment could unite and save the nation (Sheitanov 1925, 266-69).

For example, Geo Milev made more explicit the connection of high culture and prosperous nation. In his article "*Bŭlgarskiat narod dnes*" (Bulgarian People Today, 1921c),[65] he suggested that the current misfortunate state of the Bulgarian nation was a result of the failure to "[…] start the free life (which requires cultural initiative and creativity) with an organized life energy." "This is why those who were chosen to lead the people, taking the responsibility for the nation's historical fate, had the supreme duty to organize the people's vital energy and transform it into creativity [i.e. "the creative life-principle" of which Smith talks]."[66] The leading expressionist poet then identified the principle of "labor and

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official line of Bulgarian political nationalism surfaced, further deepening the intellectuals' conviction of the divide between the nation and the state.

[65] Page citations refer to the reprint in Milev, G. 1971, 48-51.

[66] [...] ние започнахме своя свободен живот (който изисква от нас културно творчество) без организирана жизнена енергия. Затова обаче ония избрани синове

honesty" (*trud i chestnost*) as the unifying factor in Bulgarian national life, a principle that would bring together the collective powers and ensure the desired "spiritual renascence" of the Bulgarian people. This was, according to Milev, "the single, most viable social-cultural principle to integrate the nation" because "the Bulgarian nation [*narod*] is constituted primarily of hard-laboring individuals in the villages and cities."[67] His appeal to the intelligentsia and the Bulgarian people was "to cultivate a leadership that will organize the urban and the peasant population [on a communitarian basis], endorsing the principle of labor – "the principle of honest cultural work" (Milev, G. 1971, 50).

> With this principle a new party would grow in the bosom of the nation, a party that would encompass the entire population and will burry all past and present parties, pernicious and destructive to the nation; the true patriots – the people's ingenious offspring – ought to come forth – they are the new and honest people […] who, under the spiritual patronage of [earlier generations of patriotic intellectuals] […] will allow the Bulgarian nation to realize its full creative potential and in the course of fulfilling its cultural mission to produce all that would ensure not simply the Bulgarian people's well being but also their cultural advancement. However, the condition to achieve this goal is one: to purify Bulgarian national life. Then, it would be possible for the Bulgarian people to see the limitless horizons of culture and cultural creativity in the future […].[68]

на народа, които поемаха в ръцете си и върху съвестта си съдбините народни, имаха един върховен дълг: да организират жизнената енергия на народа, да я организират в творчество (Milev, G. 1971, 48-49).

[67] Един е изходът: *обединяване на народните сили*. А това обединяване ще се извърши само под знака на един лозунг: *труд и честност* […] Защото той – българският народ се – състои преди всичко от хора на труда (в селата и градовете). (1971, 50-51; Milev's emphasis).

[68] С този принцип трябва да се роди из недрата на народа една нова 'партия' – голяма колкото целия народ, - която да сложи гробна плоча над всички досегашни и сегашни партии, чиято дейност е била само злотворна и пагубна за народа; трябва да излязат начело истинските синове на народа – нови и честни хора, - а не ония без морал, които са управлявали до днес България. Една нова партия – целият народ – на която невидими духовни шефове са сенките на Раковски, Ботев, Левски и всички ония честни образи от миналото, които се жертвуваха за възраждането на българския народ. [...] И само така – само тогаз българският народ ще може да разгърне в пълен обем своята жизнена енергия и в пътя на своето културно призвание да създаде онова, което ще бъде пиедестал не само на неговото благоденствие, но и на неговото културно възвеличаване. Обаче

It seems, that Milev viewed modern literature as the most representative institution to express the essence of the nation. In his article, "*Modernata Poezia*" (Modern Poetry, 1914)[69] the expressionist reaffirmed the relationship between high culture and nationality by recognizing that modern literature aspired to discover the eternal in the national soul. Defining as the most notable feature of the "modern soul" its quest for the Absolute, Milev proposed that the new aesthetics was born from the longing of "the modern soul" to achieve its "oneness with the undying Cosmos," thus clearly indicating that art "is not created for the people, but for the soul" (1914, 316). In that, modern art, in his view, followed the truest vocation of aesthetic creativity, which was to "reflect the verve, feelings, and thoughts of Eternity" (Milev, G. 1914, 316). In short, what he campaigned for was the experience of the nation as an abstract entity that although limited to a certain territory, was not defined by actual geographic or ethnographic, even cultural-historic elements, for these still warranted its concrete corporal experience as a "distinctive cultural *habitus*, material existence, and a colorful lifestyle" (Vasilev 1995, 14). In his view, nationality was an immaterial substance (*dukh*, *dusha*) that one always carried within. In this sense, Vasilev is right, when he points out that for the late Bulgarian modernists it was more important to assert the nation as a form of 'expression' (*ekspresia*) rather than a concrete representation (*izobrazhenie*; 1995, 15). On these grounds, the late Bulgarian modernists claimed their distinctiveness from previous generations, who in their view still imagined the nation as a concrete, physically extant community, rather than a spiritual principle that unified one with the world. Again, evaluating the nationalism of earlier modernists as inadequate, the artistic intelligentsia of the mid-1910s and the 1920s offered a number of revisions that at once modified and

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едно е нужно преди всичко: пречистване на българския живот. Само тогаз пред българския народ ще се разтворят кръгозорите на култура и културно творчество в бъдещето […] (Milev, G. 1971, 51).

[69] Page citations refer to the reprint in Iliev 1992, 308-316.

preserved the intellectual legacy of their immediate forerunners (Kazandzhiev 1921, Milev, G. 1921a and 1921b).

By giving prominence to Bulgarian culture, as opposed to the prominence given to the state in the official political discourses (Elenkov 1998, 22-28), the Bulgarian modernists aimed at establishing national high culture as the most important element of the Bulgarian collective identity. From this position, the late modernists modified the elitist conception of the nation formulated by their predecessors still explicitly accentuating the infringed acknowledgement and absolute guarantee of individual rights and freedoms. In their discourses, the national culture emerged as the most important institution of signification to represent the nation, wherein the conflict between the individual and society is resolved and a new form of bonding is achieved that allows for the individual to harmonize her will with the collective willpower. In my view, this was a necessary strategy of distinction for they also pursued the recognition of their rights to participate in the decision-making process concerning the political destiny of the Bulgarian nation.

In contrast to earlier modernists, who explicitly stated that poets should not partake in politics, the late modernists operated in conditions, which in their view required the artists' active participation as honest and responsible citizens in the political doings of the state. For example, Geo Milev urged his fellow writers to react to the political acts of the Democratic Alliance government, which attempted to turn Bulgaria onto a more conservative-rightist path. Milev was particularly concerned with the 'white-collar terrorism' of Aleksandŭr Tsankov, then a prime minister of the country. During his rule (1923-1931), the 'bloody professor,' as Tsankov was infamously nicknamed (cf. Detrez 1997, 321) killed thousands of Bulgarian intellectuals without pressing charges, or conducting trials. The article "*I svet vo tme svetitsia...*" (And the Light Shines Even Through

Darkness, 1924)[70] voiced Milev's daring thoughts. Here he wrote: "We, the intelligentsia – cannot and must not show indifference toward the suffering of our people […] not because of an ordinary compassion, but above all because of our regard for the well being of the nation. The blood shed from the people's hearts falls as a fiery dew upon our hearts."[71] Reacting with disgust to Tsankov's dictatorial regime, the artist declared that it was the intellectuals' responsibility to guard against violations of the nation's "natural cultural development," since intellectuals were the social agency to oppose and withstand any efforts to the contrary (Milev, G. 1971, 185). Perhaps, this is why the issue about the relationship of the Intelligentsia with the 'people' became extremely important during the wars (1912-1913; 1915-1918) and subsequently, when Bulgarian intellectuals reified the elitist conception of the nation, formulated by Pencho Slaveikov, at once rendering its alteration and adjustment.

The late modernists affirmed nationality as a subjectively experienced distinct ethical relation between the members of the Bulgarian society that was based on the recognition of one's "full humanity, interdependence with the other, and desire to make common cause with the other."[72] For example, in 1923, Geo Milev stated that:

> Today, there is nothing but Nation and Individual. An Individual in the face of the Nation. An Individual Amidst the Nation.
>
> The poet is granted his true vocation: to be first and foremost a Human. A Human amidst the People.

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[70] Page citations refer to the reprint in Milev, G. 1971, 183-88.

[71] Ний – интелигенцията – не можем (не трябва) да останем безпристрастни към онова, което преживя народът през септември; не само от проста човечност, но преди всичко – от ревност към делото на народа. Пролятата от сърцето на народа кръв пада като огнена роса в нашите сърца (Milev, G. 1971, 184).

[72] Adam McClellan has argued that the presence of these three elements is important in defining 'civility' as a term. He points to the fact that civility is exclusive in that it is tied to the notion of civil society adopted in a particular locality, thus acknowledging the relative character of the term's meaning, which is always constructed according to local perceptions, rules and cultural norms governing individual and collective behavior (cf. 2000, 81-82).

> We cannot remain insensitive witnesses to the People's tragedy – lost in our fantasies, drowned in our small feelings. Because above us, and everything ours is: The People, The Mass: inert and anonymous, yet infinite and timeless, which gives birth to all of us.[73]

His interpretation of the notion of individual, elaborated extensively in a number of articles, made plain that in Milev's view the notion functions as a spiritual category, tightly associated with the Absolute; each human being for the Bulgarian expressionist is in fact the embodiment of the Absolute, i.e., the eternal creative life-energy that runs through the history of human civilization (1921f, 174).[74] As illustrated above, the nation in his view was a primary element (*stihiia*), a mass of people – "inert and anonymous, yet infinite and timeless." It was above and beyond the singular individual, but also evaded definition in terms of the state:

> [There is nothing else] but a Nation and a Human. In the midst of horrible political tribulations, when State and Power interfere with an alien hand.
>
> But we know: Superior to both is the Nation. The holy People.
>
> We choose to stay with the People: next to the People, amidst the People. Because we are not tempted by the charity of the state; because our feelings guide us away from careerism; because our conscience cries against the present-day parvenu, who is appointed as a director or manager of some committee on the advancement of national culture; because we see a criminal in everyone who is not with the People, for we consider it a felony to compromise the position of the Individual amidst the People; therefore, we will stay with the People.[75]

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[73] Днес има само Народ и Човек. Човекът пред лицето на Народа. Човекът посред Народа.

Поетът добива истинското си призвание: да бъде преди всичко и само - Човек. Човек посред Народа.

Ние не можем да останем глухи зрители пред народната трагедия – унесени в нашите неземни блянове, потопени в нашите дребни чувства. Защото над нас и всичко наше стои: Народът, Масата – интертна и безименна, но бездънна и безсмъртна, - която ражда всички нас (Milev, G. 1971, 183-184).

[74] Page citations refer to the reprint in Milev, G. 1971, 174-177.

[75] Народ и Човек. Посред страшните перипетии на политиката, дето се намесва чуждата ръка на Властта, на Държавата.

Но ний знаем, над Властта и Държавата стои Народът. Свещеният Народ.

What Milev's emotionally charged discourse demonstrates is that this time the dichotomy (Intelligentsia vs. 'People;' individual vs. society) began to indicate the questioning of the "complete dissonance between the nationalistic and individualistic aspirations" in an attempt to bridge the gap, and achieve the effective synthesis of collective and personal, modern and traditional (Elenkov 1998, 71-72). I also detect a similar intention in Spiridon Kazandzhiev's definition of the 'people' (nation). Interpreting Slaveikov's epic work *Kŭrvava pesen*, the critic in 1921 construed the 'people' as a "darkness, chaos, incomprehensible mystery" (*narodŭt e mrak, khaos, niakakva nepostizhima taina*) that "silently transforms itself in order to bare [its creative power]" and will to act (Kazandzhiev 1921, 485). The initiator, who stirred up the 'people' – this mysterious but powerful life-force, was always a gifted individual, a leader, who was capable of "taking into his own hands the will of the masses – their fiery passion, irrational in its drives and unscrupulous in its means, which rules over life, inflamed by its own creativity."[76] "Born from the people," the Leader will transform the 'people' into a relentless creative influence that would ensure the "[passage of each individual] from the bloody sea of transient earthly suffering into the transcendental realm" of beauty, harmony and love (*za da mine kŭrvavoto, chervenoto more na zemnite vremenni bedi i da spre otvŭd*;

Ний ще останем там, дето е Народът: при Народа, сред Народа. Понеже не ни съблазняват милостите на държавата; понеже чувството ни води не в пътищата на кариеризма; понеже съвестта ни вика против ония парвенюта на деня, които получават места на директор и началници или седалища в комисии за насърчение на родното изкуство; понеже предчувствуваме престъпник у всеки, който не е при Народа; понеже предчувствуваме престъпление във всеки компромис между отделната личност и народа – затова: ще останем там, дето е Народът (Milev, G. 1971, 184).

[76] [...] и мълком се върши в него това, което излиза отпосле наяве. [...] За подвиг отреден, той ще вземе в своя власт народната воля – оная буйна страст, стихийна в пориви и безогледна в средства, която шествува победно в живота – че в нея пламък на творчество гори. От него сътворен – той него да твори!!!... (Kazandzhiev 1921, 485).

Kazandzhiev 1921, 485).[77] Thus, Kazandzhiev declared that the highest duty of the 'people' was to "nurture" the exceptional individual, who would become their leader, embodying in herself their "love and power – the hidden essence of their soul" (*liubovta i voliata – na skritiia zhrets v dushata na naroda*; Kazandzhiev 1921, 485). In this sense, although he reified the superiority of the individual over the masses, Kazandzhiev, unlike Slaveikov and the early modernists, did not necessarily see this situation as antagonistic. Apparent, in my view, is his effort to underline the unison of will and power that makes them act as one, thus highlighting the empathy and mutuality of their relation.

The new understanding of the growing bond between the intelligentsia and the people was also clearly expressed by Konstantin Gŭlŭbov, who in 1926 wrote in his essay "*Na Velika Sriada*" (On Easter Wednesday) the following: "We all are the offspring of ploughmen and diggers – [sons] of mourning mothers. But we all live with the longing for the sun: with an extraordinary determination to surpass our cultural level, to become the next stage in the development of Bulgarian people. Our present generation is an indication of a future that no [European nation] has envisioned and cannot envision [for the Bulgarian people]" (1926b).[78] Although this may seem as communist rhetoric, the intellectual opposed the political principles of the Bulgarian communist party, and distanced himself from its ultra-leftist program for cultural and social innovation. He espoused a more moderate leftist position, associating with the political ideas of social-democratism and liberalism.

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[77] Cf. also Asen Zlatarov's interpretation of the principles on which the civilized Bulgarian society should rest. In his article, "*Kulturnostta v sluzhba na rodinata*" (Cultured-ness in the Name of Motherland, 1926), the famous Bulgarian intellectual discussed the ideal of an autonomous person, stating the following: "The ideal of an autonomous person does not imply the mechanical integration of the nations in a global humanity, neither does it mean the subordination of all people under the mentorship of the most culturally advanced nation[s], *but harmonization of different types of societies in the common concert of aspirations toward Beauty, Peace, and Goodness*" (Идеалът на свободния човек не е механичното изтриване на племената в едно всемирно човечество, нито подчинението на всички останали под опеката дори и на най-напредналия в културата народ, а хармонизуване на отделните видове на човечеството в общия концерт на домогване към красота, мир и добруване). From this position, he declared, "Europeanization [cultured-ness, *kulturnost*] will rescue Bulgarianness" (1926, 94; page citations refer to the reprint in Vasilev 1995, 93-96; italics mine).

[78] Всички ние сме синове на орачи и копачи – майки с черни забрадки. Ала

Gŭlŭbov's "longing for the sun" is what Geo Milev earlier had identified as the most important characteristic of the "modern soul." In Milev's view the quest for the Absolute was also the most important aspect of one's identity as it signaled the emergence of the modern 'self' (Milev, G. 1914, 312-13). It seems that the semantic overlap in the formulations of the two Bulgarian intellectuals indicates a common tendency to identify the pursuit of cultural advancement and cultivation of a taste for the modern, anti-realist and anti-traditionalist art, as an essential manifestation of 'cultured-ness' (*kulturnost*). In the interpretation of Bulgarian modernist intelligentsia, this notion primarily meant a capacity to acknowledge and enjoy the freedom of creative expression and the virtues of pluralism (Milev, G. 1921d).[79]

Gŭlŭbov's and Milev's cultural optimism and certitude spring from their conviction that the Bulgarian intelligentsia was capable of creating an original Bulgarian culture that would make the nation an equal and respected partner in the international cultural exchange. As Gŭlŭbov insisted, the Bulgarian modernists' self-confidence was fuelled by their belief that the Bulgarian people can be both "Bulgarians and Europeans" (1926b, 59). Although, the 'People,' as

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всички ние живеем с копнежа по слънце: с могъщата воля да надхвърлим своя духовен ръст, да бъдем скок в развитието на българското племе, и днешното поколение е показалец на едно бъдеще, каквото никой от проходящите в експреса не е подозирал и не подозира (Page citations refer to the reprint in Vasilev 1995, 56-57).

[79] Cf. Milev's article, entitled "*Vŭzvanie kŭm bŭlgarskiia pisatel*" (An Appeal to the Bulgarian Writer, 1921; reprinted in Milev, G. 1971, 59-61). In this text, the modernist urged his fellow writers "whoever they are, wherever they are" to express the constant rebellion of the self against all limitations, celebrating the quest of the individual to discover and absorb the "spirit [*dukh*] of Humanity." In his view, art was born from the aspirations to attain the quintessence of humanity: "the Spirit: the Superior Spirit, the

another intellectual admitted, were still "a dark and inert mass of peasants that come into the focus of the [Bulgarian political elite] only on a market day and before election,"[80] the late Bulgarian modernists claimed now their closeness to the people and introduced a divide between the people and the state in order to substantiate their vision of the nation. Essentially, they viewed it as alienated from the state (Milev, G. 1971, 183-189). Thus, it helped them to pinpoint the incongruity of cultural and political principles, which in their view was detrimental to the process of Bulgarian self-definition. As a result, they urged for the further democratization of Bulgarian society by means of expanding its civility and 'cultured-ness' (*kulturnost*). The concept of necessary Europeanization they championed became a nebulous notion that signified the variety of social and social-political changes pursued by the progressive Bulgarian intelligentsia at that moment.

Indeed, the intention to overcome the crisis caused by the political decisions of the state stimulated the process of modernist social engineering the purpose of which was to legitimize West European liberal individualism, its value system and norms of cultured behavior (Gŭlŭbov 1927b, 60-62). The mission, as the Bulgarian modernists saw it, was to accomplish the 'civilizing' of Bulgarian society. This meant that the Bulgarians had to be turned into Europeans, since the majority of the country's population was perceived as too 'unrefined' and too 'old-fashioned' to be ready to join the European community. In this sense, Professor Penev was not alone in identifying "the insufficient 'cultured-ness' [*kulturnost*] if not total lack of 'cultured-ness' [*nekulturnost*] of the Bulgarian people" as "the most obvious hindrance to the prosperity and success of the Bulgarian society" (Penev 1924, 131).

Sacred Spirit that generates the need for Beauty and Art" (Milev, G. 1971, 61).

[80] *Българският народ* си остава една тъмна и интертна селска маса, от която [...] се интересуват само в пазарен ден и преди изборите (Author's italics; Krŭstev, K. 1926, 135)

The concept of *kulturnost* is an interesting topic for discussion, for it emerges as the focal point of all modernist efforts to create a high national culture that could sustain the implementation of West European democracy as "a strategy for the shared characteristics of human nature" and a means "for finding agreement in underlying commonalities" (cf. Hoover 1997, 47). Professor Zlatarov, for example, proposed that "the route Bulgarian people should take" in order to become a nation of "Europeanized Bulgarians" was "to adopt all that the West is better at" (1926, 96). This would generate a sense of equality that could "nurture rather than destroy the Bulgarian soul" because such 'borrowing' "strengthens one's patriotic passion" as the individual assimilates the "spiritual food of the West" consequently fostering "a sense of humanity that can sponsor forms of social progress" (Zlatarov 1926, 96; cf. Hoover 1997, 48).

Analyzed in strictly political terms, the modernists employed the notion of *kulturnost* (cultured-ness) in order to demonstrate their protest against the violations of freedom of expression. Thus, they also recognized the primacy of culture as the paramount container of materials for identity formation (Milev, G. 1921e; 1924, 183-84). In short, this means that by identifying culture as the most important attribute of civil society, the modernists, while pursuing the prominence of Modernism and high culture in the national life, were "fighting for new channels of representation, access for excluded interests to the political system, and the reform of decision-making processes and the rules of the political game" (cf. Guibernau 2001, 78). This is why their revolt was most clearly expressed in the attempt to redefine the nation as a community of cultured (Europeanized) citizens. With similar intention, they required the formation of a civil society as a challenge to the unrivaled political authority of the state (most explicitly the view is expressed in Milev, G. 1971, 184-185). On these grounds, they also proposed a new definition of identity regarding it as a specific bond between the self and the community, "an internal achievement of [the individual] that can be facilitated or hampered by the social processes" (cf. Hoover 1997, 76).

In my view, the notion of identity for them became an assembly of culturally embedded meanings that one had to harmonize on her own, "realizing that expressive freedom is required to allow this to happen" (cf. Hoover 76). Geo Milev was the most eloquent proponent of this idea. In his article "*Nebeto*" (The Sky, 1920)[81] he defined the self in terms of a transcendental connection with the endless universal creative 'spirit' (*dukh*) and the divine. In the act of creating the world (" 'I' grasping – absorbing – reality and melting it into the sky beyond," "reality fades, disappears forwards, in order to be born again in the Universe as Art,"[82] a creative act through which the individual 'self' (*Az*) vanishes into the world, becoming one with the Absolute: the realm of Art which has no physical boundaries and is timeless (Milev, G. 1920, 24-25). Expressionistic art, insists Milev, transforms reality and its concrete forms into symbols that capture the quintessence of the primitive, authentic, truest experience of the self, the source of "new, original forms" (1920, 25). Such creative acts help the individual to establish connection with the universal nature of humanity and to immerse oneself in it, sharing the common "longing for the sky beyond" and attempt to express the Absolute.

What comes out as a particularly strong point in Milev's philosophical and highly abstract critical contemplations is that the corporal experience of the 'self' as a concrete historical subject is replaced with a transcendental 'self' that materializes in one's interconnectedness with the world: in the emotional and intellectual interaction with "the community of co-nationals, the international community of nations, the universal culture of humanity" (1971, 61). On these grounds, the late modernists aspire the emancipation of the native artistic form from the outward aspects of nationality (ethnographic details, realistically rendered 'folkloric' paraphernalia such as bagpipes, folk costumes, threshing-floors, etc.; Mutafov 1927, Iliev, At. 1926b). In this respect, while attempting to intensify the suggestive and expressive abilities of their creative outpourings by implementing the aesthetic deconstruction of reality typical for modern art, the Bulgarian modernists pursued two goals: to express the native as an immediate and unrestrained emotional feeling of oneness and to connect the native with the universal seeking not the contrast between the two, but the fusion of both (Iliev At. 1926b, 107-115).[83]

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[81] Page citations refer to the reprint in Ruseva 1995, 23-25; cf. also Milev, G. 1914.

[82] Аз взема – грабва – Света и го разтапя в небето зад света. […] Светът отива, изчезва напред за да се появи в Космоса като Изкуство (Milev, G. 1920, 24)

The act of creating universal art whereby the organic blending of the native with the foreign was achieved required as a necessary step the transformation of the foreign into Bulgarian. The late modernists, unlike their predecessors, accomplished this by eroding the native form from inside, by estranging it and presenting it as 'other' (Iordanov 1993, 254). To put it in the words of one Bulgarian intellectual, "to see the native as if a foreigner looks at it," therefore discovering sincerely, without prejudices, but also without naïve over-sentimentality, the true value of Bulgarianness (Iliev, At. 1926a, 108). Geo Milev called this process "*ovarvariavane*" (barbarization; Milev, G. 1971, 210). Sirak Skitnik named it the search for the "modern primitive" (37).[84]

Regardless of the idiosyncratic designations, the common point in the ideology of Bulgarian late modernism was the idea that realism and ethnographic symbolism (including the art produced by the early Bulgarian modernists), attempted to preserve the original 'native' artistic form and therefore is insufficient in capturing the depth of one's embedded-ness in the nation. Since Bulgarianness was no longer perceived as the projection of the national 'soul' onto material objects that in turn the artist can transform into national symbols, the images of folk paraphernalia and other national emblems were evaluated as nothing but "outward" representations of the Bulgarian psyche, inadequate to convey its depth and eternal appeal (Gŭlŭbov 1926b, 1926c). This is why, in their view, modern art with its anti-realistic impetus was so suitable for the creation of original Bulgarian art. Pursuing the immediacy of expression, the emotional directness and active engagement of the reader, it allowed for the free expression of one's national sentiments triggering an almost subconscious yearning for the eternal in the national psyche, and a gush of patriotic pride. For example, Milev in his review of Traianov's lyrical collection *Bŭlgarski baladi* (Bulgarian Ballads, 1921; reprinted in Milev, G. 1971, 62-68) appreciated the poet's ability to "express the Bulgarian national soul with all its qualities" while elevating it above the "daily hubbub of politics and rhetorical nationalism" (1971, 64). He held Traianov's poetry in high esteem because the patriotic feeling was "felt in it as nothing but a subconscious creative force, which galvanizes the poet and imbues his works with the specific flavor of a Bulgarian poetry" (Milev, G. 1971, 64).

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[83] Page citations refer to the reprint in Vasilev 1995.

[84] Page citations refer to the reprint in Ruseva 1995, 33-39.

In the eyes of Bulgarian modernists, 'the fragment' and 'the primitive' were not simply aesthetic categories that identified modern approach to life, but were above all 'tools' to achieve synthesis of thoughts and emotions. They were the aesthetic means to provoke the sense of "emotional intersubjectivity" (Craib 1998, Vogler 2000) that brought through space and time the 'strangers' together, and made the existence of the Bulgarian *ethnos* possible (Skitnik 1995, 33-39). From this perspective, the focal point of Milev's aesthetic and ideological *bunt* (rebellion, revolt), which is probably the most extreme of all Bulgarian modernist gestures, constituted the explosion of established forms of national identification through the act of creating a universalistic art. Perhaps, for this reason he declared that Bulgarian literature had to destroy itself as a fossilized national tradition that celebrated the ethnic, the contemporary, and the popular ("*Protiv realizma*" [Against Realism], 1919 and "*Rodno izkustvo*" [Native Art], 1920). The poet's credo was that: "Art is born from the longing [for the eternal]. Art is struggle. Struggle to overcome oneself. Rebellion. Rebellion against oneself" (Milev, G. 1971, 60). In this rebellious act, one attained complete freedom as the tradition was surpassed, but "not killed" (Skitnik 1995, 35). Thus, the modern 'self' was liberated from "enslavement by the past," i.e., freed from the imposed models of identification as one was open to discover, experience, and express her true identity (Skitnik 1995, 35).

The process of creating art was thus equated with the process of creating a 'self' where the experience of Bulgarianness was akin to the involuntary, unpredictable, irrational subconscious movements of the soul (Skitnik 1995, 35). The sense of belonging-ness then was perceived as impossible to define in rational terms. It was not a construct, but "a confession" wherein one achieved the "lost immediacy" of openly reacting to the other, a form of "primitive" empathy that helped one to recognize the roots of her self-definition (Skitnik 1995, 35). Therefore, modern art was acclaimed because of its abstract and highly elusive, symbolical forms of expression. Its anti-realistic method gave freedom to the artist to transform reality according to her own vision and desires, simultaneously evoking a sense of metaphysical insurgence against the limitations imposed by the geographical and ethnocentric definition of Bulgarian nationality, which insisted on the nation's physical experience as existence situated in a concrete place and within a particular social-political-cultural order (*otechestvo*).

In Bulgarian modernist discourses, modern art was moreover appreciated and promoted primarily because it was conceptualized as the realm where the sense of 'belatedness' is surmounted as the artist outstrips the 'provincial rooted-ness' of her limited national existence and experiences her commensurability with the world (Ruseva 1995, 15; Milev, G. 1971, 179). On the other hand, because of its symbolical power to unite through the quest for the eternal and the sense of humanity it instills, modern art was also recommended as a means to tie together the 'community of strangers' that was the Bulgarian nation. Respectively, it was affirmed as an ultimately collectivistic and 'constructive' form of art (Ruseva 1995, 15). Geo Milev, for example, declared that only when Bulgarian authors learned to describe the Human with her "life pulse" and "start drinking from the source of the primitive forces of human drives" they would have the capacity to create national literature that was alive and significant (1971, 180). "Such literature we will have once we stop thinking of art as a private affair, but instead accept it is a collective exigency" (ibid.) Perhaps, this is what motivated the intellectuals of the mid-1910s and 1920s to see Bulgarian modern culture as a fundamental integrative principle to connect Bulgarians on the basis of a constant struggle for self-improvement and self-definition. In this, they recognized the equality and basic right of all Bulgarian citizens, regardless of differences in tastes, political or professional interests. Again, Milev is the most ardent proponent of this view. In his article, "*Bŭlgarskiat pisatel*" (The Bulgarian Writer, 1923),[85] he asserted that the artist was no different than other people. His talent and inspiration was nothing but "hard labor" and "spiritual energy" (1923, 177). Discarding previous conceptions of artistic exclusivity as outdated, Milev contended: "Only the Human remains. Nothing more but the Human: earthly, imperfect and alive in this world" (ibid.).

The modernists thus pushed for participative processes that acknowledged "the need to incorporate means of communication that facilitate exchanges whereby differing visions can be expressed on the integrative principles that tie the [community] together" (cf. Hoover 1997, 78). Simply put, they pushed for pluralism that was based on the recognition of one's equal and autonomous status as a social agent, which allowed the person through free and voluntary interactions to make possible the harmonization of "the particular and the universal aspects of [her] own strivings for identity" (cf. Hoover 1997, 78). Worthy of note in this regard is Gŭlŭbov's explicit declaration that the newspaper *Iztok* (East) which he founded was eclectic and aimed at creating a space for different voices to express their opinions on significant cultural issues and problems of common concern (1927c, 59). Interpreted in the light of Hoover's suggestions, the modernist notion of *kulturnost* therefore evoked a concept of national identity that is essentially democratic as it implied that on the basis of equal rights of participation, the community is capable of respecting and tolerating differences of opinions, tastes, and dispositions. In short, the Bulgarian modernists pushed for the creation of a civil society.

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[85] Page citations refer to the reprint in Milev, G. 1971, 177-183.

The notion of civil society, as it is typically applied in Western European and American thought, usually means "the expansion of democracy," identifying a "desired social order that recognize[s] the virtues of pluralism and allow[s] the autonomous agentic individual to freely associate and form relations in a sphere that [is] outside the power of the state" (Hann 1996, 1-26). It seems that the Bulgarian modernists were well aware of this option, for they clearly articulated a boundary between the nation and the state. One of the many connotations in their notion of high national culture is the implication of a social order that was different from the state. The nation (*rodina; narod*), in its completeness and transcendence, was opposed to the political state (*otechestvo; durzhava*), therefore giving the late modernists opportunity to assert the right of Bulgarian citizens to associate freely in the public sphere where they could express their aspirations for *kulturnost* and civility. Art was emancipated from the control of the state only to be affirmed as the realm where the Bulgarian citizenship extended since the populace could voice different opinions on the problems of common concern. As a result, by emphasizing the importance of the avant-garde art and literature they produced, the late modernists let the political elite see that "the state itself cannot provide an identity of its citizens" since, as Hoover has persuasively argued, "identity formation takes place primarily in civil society, rather than through the state and even the economy" (cf. 1997, 40). In this context, the modernist intelligentsia challenged the status quo by conceiving of themselves as an intermediary social agency, whose prerogative was to create those values and principles of *kulturnost* and civility that would bring the state and the people together. Thus, the modernists also tried to combine the political and cultural principles that defined Bulgarian self-determination. As Gŭlŭbov has put it, "Bulgarian writers can play a crucial role in the process of [Bulgarian society's nationalization], being the channel through which the civic ideas and sentiments that guide the life of the Western individual, can enter Bulgaria" (1926c, 81).

Indeed, the late Bulgarian modernists pushed for a "supervised" Europeanization, whereby the local intellectuals "could resist those influences that might hamper the national progress, thus preserving the specificity and originality of [their] native culture" (Gŭlŭbov 1926c, 80). Gŭlŭbov insisted that the goal of this directed Europeanization was "to gradually institute the missing criteria for what is valuable and characteristic in our life and our cultural practices that is worthy of protecting against the western ravishment" (1926c, 80). In this, I see a typical reaction of a post-colonial intellectual, who struggled "through indigenous means of establishing competence, integrity, and mutuality" to overcome the nation's colonial legacy and confront the challenges that modernity posed (cf. Hoover 1997, 39). Again, it is important to stress that the Europeanization envisioned by the Bulgarian progressive intelligentsia was different from what the more advanced Western nations applauded. Gŭlŭbov, for example, regarded it as a process that would take place under the control of the Bulgarian intelligentsia thereby subordinating the foreign to the native. As he and like-minded Bulgarian artists at that time proclaimed, the process involved also a deliberate breaking away from "the tight grip of the narrow-minded *passé* [realist] aesthetic, withering like the garland of an old maid" (1926c, 80). This statement is significant because it shows that Bulgarian modernists did not simply copy techniques, attitudes and methods from the West, but interpreted these from the position of what was beneficial and served their specific (local) cultural interests. In this respect, the cultural program the late modernists elaborated was both a cry for a new aesthetic as well as a cry for further nationalization and democratization of Bulgarian society.

The essential characteristics of this cultural program, especially in post-war historical conditions, were anti-realism, nationalism, and communitarian individualism. The latter term obviously needs explanation for it is coined with the intention to render the peculiar meaning that the Bulgarian modernist intelligentsia ascribed to the notion of civility. It is offered as an analytical tool to signify the local interpretation of the West European ideal of civil society, which during the late 1910s and early 1920s was perceived in Bulgaria as a normative category that encompassed ideas about good government, virtue, and responsibility. Thus, the notion of civility surfaced as a key element of the proposed Europeanization and modernization.

I will launch my analysis of the modernist idea of civility as interpreted by Bulgarian modernists in relation to their definition of Bulgarian national identity, remarking that Bulgarian modernists used the rhetoric of West European civil society in order to discuss and criticize the merits of governmental decision-making process concerning the quality and direction of the social life they experienced. Typical in this sense is Penev's discourse glossed earlier. His and other modernist intellectualizations outlining alternative models for Bulgarian social development reflect, in my opinion, a sincere effort to understand how their society has changed, and on this basis, to articulate feasible prospects. Seen in this light, the notion of civility, in my view, bears extremely important implications, for it expresses the Bulgarian intelligentsia's view of the 'good citizen,' who in terms of their wide-ranging cultural program was an individual capable of making an informed assessment about the changing quality of life (cf. Hann 1996, 28).

Paradoxically, the Bulgarian modernists adopted the concept of civil society as a normative concept that helped them introduce in the public sphere a division between the state and the nation (people) in pursuit of their unity. If this is viewed as a strategy to open a space for the criticism of the state and the contemporary political-social realities, then their position is not illogical. As previously noted, the fundamental drive of the modernist practice was to disrupt the current reality in the neighborhood where the particular modernists lived. In this respect, Bulgarian modernists viewed the formation of a civil society as the absolute guarantor for the recognition of the infringed rights and freedoms of the individual. Therefore, they espoused the principles of universalist (cosmopolitan) individualism, while also acknowledging the need for social accountability. In short, Nietzschean ultra-individualism, particularly in the writings of Geo Milev became a form of communitarian individualism that aimed at binding the citizens together in matters of common concern. In this context, the various, often conflicting associations of Bulgarian writers and artists served as a representative system of common-interest groups that could affect the public policy, requiring the expansion of human and civil rights. A case in point is Milev's appeal to the Bulgarian writers, as well as a number of articles that addressed crucial issues for the functioning in Bulgaria of a civil society. Complementing his critical meditations on modern art, publications such as "*Bŭlgarskiat pisatel,*" "*Kraiat na inteligentsiata*" (Intelligentsia's End), "*Narstud,*" "*Politseiska kritika*" (Police Censorship), "*Durzhava i tsurkva*" (State and Church) and others, clearly reveal his communitarian ideological position, publicizing a sense of civic responsibility and appreciation of commonality and mutual dependence as primary values, urgently requiring the cultivation of changes of historical conditions.

Central to all these explicitly political texts is the idea of the free individual, whose full realization Milev saw as the absolute goal of the national society. This idea consistently was articulated in his earlier writings, becoming most apparent in articles such as "*Modernata poeziia*" and "*Nebeto.*" In Milev's view, the free individual was above all one, who thought and acted independently, always in agreement with his conscience and high morals. The free individual was not passive, for he actively participated in the public life, engaging with the issues of the day, always in defense of the ideal of free life. The most distinguishing features of his character were his honesty, creativity, and hard work. The free individual was responsible for his actions and had a concern for the good of the whole society. He did not compromise his beliefs and ideals. He was optimistic. He did not give up in the face of oppression and terror, but firmly stood up in defense of the sacrosanct human rights. The free individual was not bound by limited and empty nationalistic sentiments because he recognized one absolute: Humankind. Because of his profound universalism, the free individual was also a true patriot.

This image, in which one could recognize without difficulty the personality of Milev himself, is a construct that emerges from the various intellectualizations he had left as a legacy. In their mass such writings voice the idea that independence of thought and faith in one's own decisions was extremely important. "I am in control of my own destiny, my will, my conscience, my heart are in my power. I have not lost control over myself. Nobody can take it from me," he wrote in a letter to his father as early as 1914. The confidence of Milev is impressive, but it never grew into hubris, for his self-esteem was always tempered by his consideration of others' dignity and self-respect. It is these qualities that he also strove to instill in his compatriots, when he wrote that the religion of the modern intellectual should be "profound faith in [the incessant progress] of the human being" (1924c).

Similarly to Slaveikov, Milev was a stalwart optimist, who believed in the ultimate goodness of people and the victory of humanism over pragmatism and selfishness. Evidence is profuse. It seems, at times, his very sharp criticism was motivated by his belief in the merit of pursuing "common aims greater than the selfish, conflictual, and narrowly private goals that might otherwise shape the character of public life" (cf. Strauss 1996, 230). Particularly interesting in this light is his article "*Politseiska kritika*." It was published in the same issue, together with Milev's expressionistic masterpiece *Septemvri*. As the poet openly stated, the article was meant to express his protest against the confiscation of the sixth issue of the journal *Plamŭk*. This act of civil protest, however, turned into an angry meditation on the fundamental principles of civil society and a heated argument in defense of individual's freedom of thought and freedom of expression. In his list of the free society's essential attributes, Milev named such rights as the right to criticize, to think independently, to write and publish freely, to read, and ultimately, to live. The citizens of democratic Bulgaria, he sarcastically remarked, were deprived of those fundamental human rights, as the government enforced laws and legal acts that encouraged the Bulgarian people to stop thinking (Milev, G. 1971, 271-272). The highly educated ruling political elite regarded the people as a herd of brainless livestock (*stado*) that needed someone else to think and make decisions on its behalf. However, the responsible citizen could not accept this situation, because the people "are thinking" and the possibility of a "policed criticism" was a futile fantasy of any authoritarian regime (Milev, G. 1971, 272).

"Thought has no master and no tyrant" (*misŭlta ne tŭrpi nito gospodar, nito tiranin*), proclaimed the poet, embracing civic disobedience and revolt. His revolutionary impetus increased as he briefly touched upon the new international developments. "Today," wrote the patriot, "[…] the people of the world realize that they are the masters of their destiny, there is no need for 'elected' or forcefully imposed authorities to supervise them." As "the idea of the singular individual slowly melts away" (*kogato otdelnata lichnost umira*), it is absurdity to think that human ideas and struggle for freedom can be suppressed.[86] He boldly challenged state authorities by declaring that, "the journal *Plamŭk* (Flame) may be banned. The journal *Plamŭk* may not exist. But there is not a firefighting unit in the world that can put down the fire of my thoughts."[87] Refusing to compromise his beliefs, the poet-citizen then declared: "We will not accept the sentence of the deadening censorship that makes us write what we neither think nor feel" (*No nii niama da se sŭglasim s prisŭdata na politseiskata kritika, koiato ni kara da*

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[86] Днес, когато всички народи в света узряват да бъдат господари на съдбата си, без да я поверяват в ръцете на други – 'избрани' или натрапили се чрез насилие - господари (Milev, G. 1971, 273).

[87] Може "Пламък" да бъде спрян. Може да не съществува списание "Пламък." Но няма в света пожарна команда, която да може да угаси пламъка на мисълта (Milev G. 1971, 273).

pishem tova, koeto nito mislim, nito chuvstvame). Being true to his own morals, Milev advocated that, unlike those hypocrites who only on paper claimed their love and expressed their concern with the nation's well being, he would follow his ideals and his conscience so that he could continue to be a true patriot (1971, 273).

Apparently, the individualism of Milev is communitarian in the sense that he demanded recognition of one's full humanity. In his view, every citizen was entitled the right to express his concerns about the common good and to react to what was harmful or in violation of the fundamental principles of free life. Embracing the uniqueness and difference of individual opinions, his acclaim of independent thought and civic responsibility stemmed from his respect for the basic rights of the other person, thus providing a positive example of a virtue he regarded necessary for citizenship. Social activism then, in his discourses emerges as one of the most significant features of democratic society, and he encouraged his compatriots to be active in resisting the power of the state. At least, this is how I read his public protest against the confiscation of the literary journal *Plamŭk* he edited.

Milev's position essentially was that public and private interests could harmonize if individuals took responsibility for, and gave priority to the social good. In the poet's eyes, modern art supported such balance because it was an emotionally charged and socially engaged expression of the artist's independent thought. Milev admitted that in the quest for harmonizing the personal and public interests one may resort to means that were uncivil, yet that did not mean that one was not a good citizen. In another article, tackling the problem of traditional morality, Milev declared that "[…] Today, we would like to see barbarians, hooligans, savages – with fiery eyes and iron teeth. Barbarians – a new race – that would give new blood to [the Bulgarian nation]."[88]

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[88] […] ний желаем да видим днес варвари, хулигани, печенеги – с пламък в очите и железни зъби. Варвари, нова раса – която да влее нова кръв на българската

Reading Milev's texts, I find it ironical that the late Bulgarian modernists tried to articulate the ideal of a good citizen resorting to language and imagery that clearly undermined the implications of the romanticized Western model. In their discourses, of which Milev's pronouncements are the most representative in their extremity, the notion of civility rarely suggests polite and refined speech, good manners, courtesy, and other traits the historical Western term typically connotes. Of course, this is only a segment of the term's multiple semantic dimensions, but as recent theorizations have shown, it is quite a significant one as articulated in the history of Western political and social thought.[89] In this light, the Bulgarian modernist concept of civility fits more McClellan's revised definition, which needs to be reiterated again here.

McClellan has argued that civility is "an impulse or mood, which requires the fulfillment of three criteria: the recognition of the full humanity of both one's self and the other, the awareness of one's interdependence with the other, and desire to make common cause with the other" (McClellan 2000, 78). In my view, the Bulgarian modernists extolled patriotism as a civil virtue in this very sense. Denying the need for yielding to the power of the state, Milev, for example, declared: "National sentiments, patriotism, love for the fatherland, faith in the national ideal, ethnic boundaries, historical past and so on, are devalued stock on the contemporary social-political market; they are blank cartridges with which we cannot catch the desired bird of freedom."[90] Locating themselves as a representative group of citizens mediating between the state and the people, the late Bulgarian modernists actually functioned as a social agency capable of

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поезия (Milev, G. 1971, 211).

[89] Cf. McClellan in Rouner 2000, 78-93; also the debate between Robert B. Pippin and Daniel O. Dahlstrom in Rouner 2000, 103-125.

[90] Национално чувство, патриотизъм, любов към родината, вяра в 'народния идеал', етнически граници, историческо минало и т.н. – това са днес обезценени акции, които не се котират на днешната политико-социална борса; това са халосни патрони, с които не може да се улучи желаната птица на свободата (Milev G. 1971, 277).

bringing together the political and the cultural principles defining the nation. Such awareness gave them the confidence to oppose conventional interpretations of nationality and motivated the formulation and pursuit of their modernization objectives, the ultimate purpose of which was the successful completion of the process of Bulgarian nationalization.

Indeed, from the evidence presented here I hope it is clear that the Bulgarian modernists were the agency most actively engaged in 'correcting' the negative collective self-awareness, while simultaneously elaborating and promoting on the global market a new image of the Bulgarian nation as an advanced, sophisticated and democratic cultural-political unit. In this light, the introduction of European thought into the Bulgarian cultural tradition was a pivotal moment in the politics of the modernists, who also turned to Bulgarian folklore in search of the true Bulgarian soul. Seeking the synthesis of native and foreign, the Bulgarian modernists tried to create a system of new values that would govern individual behavior by affirming universal personal qualities and characteristics, which, according to the modernists, were also the primordial features of the Bulgarian ethnic character. In this regard, Pencho Slaveikov was the first of a number of modernists, who tried shattering the conventional stereotype of national self-identification as a negation of others (the Bulgarian as a non-Greek, non-Serbian, non-Turkish). He refused to compare the Bulgarians with their neighbors but rather focused on re-discovering, reconstructing, inventing, and representing a new distinctive collective self that he labored to inscribe within the European context. He tried to create a new national mythology, which geographically situated the Bulgarians at the center of the Balkan Peninsula, and rigorously argued their importance for the cultural, political and economic revival of the region, thus enhancing the singularity and originality of the Bulgarian national culture.

Later modernists, while following in Slaveikov's steps, saw themselves as the missing social agency to accomplish the well-balanced transition from colonial to post-colonial cultural and political existence. In this regard, Bulgarian modernism began as an attempt to define the subjective, private sphere in Bulgarian culture and to create a novel *individualistic* philosophy and a world outlook that would unite the ideas of European individualism with the Enlightenment admiration of Freedom and public Heroism (Iordanov 1993, 8). It ended as a project that, similar to Ukraine, focused on the creation of a civil society inasmuch as the ultimate goal of the modernizing activities of the Bulgarian progressive intelligentsia was the transformation of the 'people' (*narod*) into a nation of cultured, sophisticated and morally superior individuals through the refinement of literary and artistic tastes. Thus, the desire for fundamental cultural and social changes (break away from all previous traditions, denial of the established norms of cultural and ethnic identification) was very strong and the modernists pushed for the radical transformation of the Bulgarian mindset by urging the cultivation of a national high culture. In the eyes of modernists, the national culture served as the means to win the respect of Western nations, proving not only the longevity and richness of Bulgarian tradition but also its status as a modern European culture that is capable of sustaining Bulgarian political sovereignty.

Europe, then, was introduced in the Bulgarian intellectual space as a 'unified' whole. It was conceptualized as a totality, an intellectual space where the conflicts and tensions between the European national cultures on their own terms (for example the rivalry between French and Germans, or British and French) were insignificant. This 'oddity' produced the peculiar polyphony and ambiguity characteristic of Bulgarian modernists' relationship with Europe. The fervent desire to express their own, original, and nationally specific understanding, while seeking the unity of Bulgarian and Western thought, determined the modernists' modernizing efforts. Accordingly, the main principle of their cultural program the modernists saw in the *synthesis* of 'indigenous' Bulgarian values (*svoe, rodno* – native; encoded for example in 'authentic' folklore) with the humanistic values represented by a number of canonized 'treasures' of world culture (*chuzhdo* – foreign). Granted, the stress always was put on the *Bulgarianness* of the outcome and only such creative adaptations bore significance and were encouraged.

Apparently, the ethnic 'bias' of Bulgarian modernists had a deeper social-psychological motivation. It was a reaction to the failures of political nationalism and the partial resolution of the Bulgarian national question. The awareness of the 'dismemberment' of the Bulgarian nation, its geographical tearing apart, defined all their intellectual quests, especially with respect to modeling the process of the national-cultural development. Hence the emphasis on the 'national.' Of course, this was a limited position, but it was compulsory in terms of the redemptory and reformist intentions of the Bulgarian progressive intelligentsia. In this respect, as Jusdanis has noted on another occasion, Bulgarian cultural (modernist) nationalism acted as a dynamic force rather than a "compensatory prize for victimized people in search of absent ideals," for it evolved as a revolutionary, progressive, and an utopian ideology, seeking the transformation of the inherited social order, pushing Bulgarian society "into a modern, global world" (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 10).

6. GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In this last section I review the main points and observations made in the course of this study, and address some of the issues raised with respect to the analysis of marginal cultures. I begin by reiterating the idea that the Bulgarian and Ukrainian Modernisms occurred as intellectual projects related to, but different from, the Modernisms originally formulated in countries such as France and England. If we accept Bourdieu's and other theoretical models regarding the factors that propelled the struggle for establishing the autonomy of the artistic field in 'bourgeois' societies of Western Europe, it becomes clear that both localities under scrutiny did not conform to that model. The modernity experienced by the Ukrainian and Bulgarian intellectuals was unlike the one known to the intellectuals of other European countries. As I have tried to show, the intellectuals in both Ukraine and Bulgaria felt marginalized and disempowered as a *national* elite. This particular experience strongly colored the objectives and goals they pursued through the 'import' of the idea of pure aesthetic.

The priority that the local intelligentsia gave to socio-political and national issues was not surprising if one takes into account the strong desire of those intellectuals to 'catch up' with developments occurring in the global community. Advancement in turn-of-the-century Bulgaria and Ukraine meant *inaugurating* the processes of modernization (i.e., technological and economic innovation, the creation of the nation-state, etc.). Unlike in Western Europe, the disruption of modernity in those two localities came about concurrently with the initiation of modernization. This fact posed for the national intellectuals a number of very distinctive problems. In the first place, the colonial legacy in both countries influenced the local intelligentsia's choices regarding the changes they wanted to introduce in their societies. Therefore, the modernists in both Ukraine and Bulgaria actively engaged in the creation of political, economic, and socio-cultural structures alternative to the inherited (or dominant) colonial ones. In this regard, the strong socio-political orientation of both modernist projects is a logical outcome of the peculiarity of historical conditions that occasioned the modernization of these two societies. It can hardly be viewed as a distortion or insufficiency in development of these people. In my view, the colonial situation in Ukraine and the post-colonial situation in Bulgaria pre-conditioned the uncharacteristic evolution of Bulgarian and Ukrainian Modernisms as ideologies of cultural nationalism. Thus, the entanglement of socio-political, cultural, and purely aesthetic issues was not only natural but more importantly, necessary for the success of the modernizing initiatives undertaken by the local intelligentsia.

Defining the Ukrainian and Bulgarian modernist movements as a form of cultural nationalism is problematic in itself. Although I do not consider such justification necessary, in this final section I will do so, while simultaneously reviewing the set of general conclusions reached in the course of my comparative cultural study. The problem first of all arises because of the definition usually attached to the notion of cultural nationalism, which is viewed as a significant, albeit subordinate, aspect of political nationalism (cf. Gellner 1983, Hobsbawm 1990, Kedourie 1993). In contemporary anthropological and socio-political approaches to nationalism, John Hutchinson should be credited for his systematic research on the nature of cultural nationalism, always offering an eloquent defense of its distinctive character. Taking his views as a point of departure, I would like to propose a list of attributes that help conceptualize both the Ukrainian and Bulgarian modernist movements as cultural nationalist projects.

According to Hutchinson, cultural nationalism "does have a politics, but it is communitarian and diversitarian" (1999, 393). The primary goal of cultural nationalists is the moral rebirth and regeneration of their respective communities, the ideology itself called upon "at times of deep-seated social crisis, when statist nationalism seems to have failed, in order to offer new pathways for individual and collective action" (Hutchinson 1999, 393). "In evoking historical models, cultural nationalists act primarily as moral and social innovators not as reactionaries, in seeking to formulate an indigenous basis of collective progress" (Hutchinson 1999, 393). In attempting to define the collective personality, cultural nationalists seek to revive authentic and distinctive collective features, extolling the singularity of their cultural identity, insisting that this distinctive collective personality has "a name, unique origins, history, culture, homeland, and social and political practices" (Hutchinson 1999, 394).

The developments in turn-of-the-century Bulgaria and Ukraine suggest that the modernists reacted to a particular crystallization of ethnic identity, which naturalized the peasants as the embodiment of Ukrainianness and Bulgarianness respectively. In principle, they disagreed with the adoption of such a demotic model for national identification because it inadequately promoted the institution of a modern, highly intellectual and sophisticated national culture. In both societies, therefore, Modernism developed in opposition to other approaches to nation formation and nation building, often refusing to compromise on the principle positions underlying its specific policies of cultural invention.

Struggling to assert their cultural hegemony and to make it a natural right of the intelligentsia, the modernists in Ukraine and Bulgaria adopted at the beginning of the twentieth century the ideology of pure aesthetic as a public moral position that allowed them to criticize the state. Gradually, the ideology evolved as a locus of opposition to the state. Regardless of the nature of the statist nationalism they reacted against, the modernists in both localities construed themselves as an alternative 'social' force that challenged the official political solutions to the national question. As Hutchinson has noted, rivalry and "internal competition" in the definition of the nation is crucial "for the group identity and survival." "The parochialism of the struggle […] separates the population off from uncomprehending 'outsiders,' and the recurring but evolving rivalry provides a repertoire of options from which leaders can select in order to cope with a changing world" (1999, 396). In this sense, the processes of negotiation and competition over the symbols of the nation in Ukraine and Bulgaria were institutionalized through the "internal dialogue incomprehensible to outsiders," as Hutchinson aptly puts it (1999, 396), that gave rise to the national public domain. When the Ukrainians Karmans'kyi, Sriblians'kyi, Ievshan, and the Bulgarians Slaveikov, Dr. Krŭstev, and Debelianov (as well as others), publicly demonstrated their commitment to certain modernists behaviours (e.g., a bohemian lifestyle, a preference for modernist literature and arts, migration to the large urban centers, etc.), they provided a form of binding together the community of citizens (citizens-to-be, in the Ukrainian case). The rejection of populist and realist ideologies (above all, the association with the peasant masses, renunciation of symbolically traditional clothing, communal and cultural norms) supported the formulation of modernizing objectives that explicitly questioned the established social and political order. It opened a space for creating institutions that would maintain the distinctively modern 'moral' of the Bulgarian and Ukrainian societies. As I have tried to show, the modernist commitment to instill Western values of social democracy, liberalism, and individualism motivated the struggle of the local artistic intelligentsia to emancipate itself from the economic and social constraints of an oppressive (in the Ukrainian case, colonial) state, and to seek recognition of their expertise and authority in the production of national cultural values.

In both localities, the modernist project was triggered by a sense of moral crisis, which resulted from the failures of statist nationalism to solve the national problem. This attitude surfaces in the writings of Lesia Ukrainka and Volodymyr Vynnychenko and becomes prominent in Khvyl'ovyi's works. In Ukraine, particularly in the years after 1917, this dissatisfaction clearly manifested itself in the growing awareness of Ukrainian intellectuals that the practicing of aesthetic and cultural autonomy is possible only in a self-determined and free society, that is, in a Ukrainian national state. In this respect, as the discourses of the *khatiany* (i.e., the contributors to *Ukrains'ka khata*) and Khvyl'ovyi indicate, the aesthetic principle of 'art for art's sake' was discovered and utilized as an effective strategy to create a national high culture that could integrate all Ukrainians and provide the discursive means for imagining the sovereign Ukrainian state. It is in this context—i.e., an intensified anti-colonial struggle aiming at resisting the attempts at Russification and gruesome Soviet political repression—that I define the modernist project in Ukraine as a political project which called for the articulation of a particular version of Ukrainian identity. This version was predicated on the promotion of an elitist and civic concept of the nation that clearly supported the Ukrainian intelligentsia's desire for political self-determination. The principles of aesthetism, and the priority given to the construction of a national high culture were crucial aspects of the modernist project, which developed as a movement that tried to make meaningful the formation of a Ukrainian national state. Otherwise, the prominence given to culture as an agency of social change and the creation of indigenous cultural forms makes little sense as a goal in itself. It should be noted, however, that culture in the Ukrainian modernist project is not subordinate to the political formulation of the nation, but an equally powerful articulation of the essential principles of Ukrainian self-determination, which helped to form a distinctive egalitarian and libertarian ideal of the nation-state (cf. Hutchinson 1999, 401).

In the ideological climate of the USSR in the 1920s, the Ukrainian modernists experienced their statelessness as an impediment to the progress of their society and they reacted to it in the best manner they knew. They saw modern national culture as the most essential condition to ensure the unity and singularity of the Ukrainian nation. It provided the 'free' space where Ukrainian identity can be celebrated and unreservedly experienced as a positive life opportunity. Ukrainian modernists, thus, directly challenged the existing social order by giving priority to the nation as a cultural-political principle of integration. In the early-twentieth century, they insisted on, and agitated for, the Europeanization of their community because they wanted to validate their culture and identity, asserting a place for a non-existent state in the international order.

From 1917 onward, some sought the recognition of their right to form a sovereign country as the most propitious place for the progress and efflorescence of the Ukrainian nation. Although in their quest for articulating 'the modern Ukrainian psyche,' Ukrainian modernists continued to mobilize ethnic criteria of self-determination, it also seems that they tried to expand the semantic field of the category to include more civic terms. Vynnychenko's civic position as well as Khvyl'ovyi's agitation for recognizing the rights of Ukrainians to self-rule is typical in this regard. Thus, reinforcing the sense of pride and shared identity, manifested in one's willful attachment to the Ukrainian nation, was one of the strategies the modernists in Ukraine employed when recruiting Ukrainian patriots. In their discourses, individuals like Ukrainka, Vynnychenko (in the early-twentieth century), and Zerov, Khvyl'ovyi and others (in the mid-1920s), demonstrated the value of one's cultural belonging. In this manner, they argued for the construction of a distinctive Ukrainian civil and cultured society, which could guard and preserve the collective personality in times of threat and growing foreign influences. They encouraged each speaker of the Ukrainian language to refract this collective personality subjectively, searching for meaningful options in constructing a life and identity for oneself. The emphasis on the value of shared identity and the international orientation of the Ukrainian modernist intelligentsia, who decisively refused the mediation of Russian culture in the intellectual and cultural interaction with Europe, are probably the most prominent aspects of the modernist program. The valorization of Ukrainian high culture, consequently, was performed through the inculcation of Ukrainian Modernism as a distinctive national version of the European modernist ideology of subversion. It endeavored to produce highly cultured and sophisticated individuals, who worked for the spiritual, cultural, political, and economic advancement of their native society.

Thus, the contradictory nature of the Ukrainian modernist definition of the nation, which combined both civic and ethnic principles of self-identification, emerges as one of those peculiarities that make the nation-building process unique wherever it happens to take place around the globe. The modernist project in Ukraine aimed at reducing or overcoming tensions and antinomies over the content of national culture and identity which characterized the Ukrainian national space during the first half of the twentieth century. The arising twofold articulation of national identity (European-Ukrainian) was thus a strategy that allowed the modernists to successfully express and maintain their distinctiveness in resistance to both Russian colonial pressures, and unwanted influences from Europe, at once affirming their independent status as mediators between the self and the world. In fact, the modernist position cut most powerfully through both the colonial discourse and the national counterdiscourse (to use Shkandrij's appropriation of Terdiman's formulation; 2001, 199), aspiring to find the truly national style (as Hutchinson has pointed out, one that represents a given community's historically rooted and unique way of life; 1999, 393). From this perspective, Ukrainian modernists were cultural nationalists who sought to use tradition to "legitimate social innovation through selective borrowing from others," while simultaneously "rallying to the cause of building on indigenous traditions" (cf. Hutchinson 1999, 404). In this respect, their ambivalent treatment of Ukrainian vernacular culture—at once denouncing it and insisting on its 'modernization' through extensive experimenting with available folklore items—was a strategy of distinction that helped Ukrainian modernists affirm their status as 'modernizers.' The aesthetic and formal treatment of Ukrainian folklore in the works of Ukrainka, Kobylians'ka, Tychyna, and other Ukrainian modernists, pursued the re-contextualization, innovation, and idiosyncratic reinvention of common material, and served to differentiate them from their predecessors (romantics and realist-populists), who revered tradition. The modernists did not idolize tradition, but their practice of using folklore materials produced a specific type of literature that opened a space for experimentation that had a distinctively Ukrainian flavour. In addition, through such experimentation, the modernists successfully realigned their cultural heritage with Europe, asserting their right to control the appropriation of vernacular traditions. Let me reiterate that, in my view, the modernists in Ukraine not only made tradition meaningful in the context of modernity, but most of all, effectively resisted the influences coming from Europe, resorting to local resources in sustaining the singularity and originality of their national culture.

In Bulgaria, it was the experience of the nation as 'dismembered' that instigated the sense of moral crisis and urged the patriotically oriented intelligentsia to seek alternatives to the tensions produced by the political solutions of the national question which the state proposed. The emphasis on culture in this instance aimed at establishing control over the processes of nation building, which the progressive Bulgarian intelligentsia felt were taking an unfavourable course. The prevalent traditional model of identity and culture-invention accentuated the negative experiences of the Bulgarian nationality and relied too much on the mobilization of inferiority complexes and sense of belatedness that were inherited from colonial times. The modernists thus undertook the difficult task of promoting modernization and nationalization by insisting on the creation of a Bulgarian high culture that pursued the moral resurrection of the Bulgarian community through its Europeanization.

The most notable feature of the Bulgarian modernist project was its attempt to reduce the effects of the self-colonizing conservative version of national identity, nurturing the collective sense of self since the beginning of the Renascence period and during the struggle for liberation. This conservative version was predicated on the absence of a *modern* high culture, which left the Bulgarian intelligentsia often confused and in a state of spiritual stagnation. As I have shown in this study, the modernists in Bulgaria reacted to the traditional conceptualization of the nation, engaging in a form of social criticism that tried to find a balance between the 'foreign' (i.e., imported from the West) and the 'native' (i.e., original resources for self-expression, such as the inherited oral tradition and the memory of the high culture of medieval Bulgaria). The ultimate purpose of the modernist project, then, was to overcome the tensions caused by the feeling of 'belatedness,' which characterized the self-perception of the Ukrainian modernists as well, in order to affirm the place of the artistic intelligentsia as the legitimate and most competent creator of national-cultural values.

The valorization of Western ideas of pure art in Bulgaria happened because this ideology was seen as the most potent intellectual resource to ensure the complete nationalization of Bulgarian society. Like the Ukrainian modernists, their Bulgarian counterparts positioned themselves as mediators in the cultural exchange with the world, warranting the distinctiveness of the collective personality in its interactions with Europe, thus building also a culture that was capable of attracting diverse Bulgarian populations and uniting them. In addition, the import of West European modernist ideas in Bulgaria assisted the struggle of the Bulgarian modernists to strengthen their status as a national and cultural leaders, vesting prestige and value in modern culture-building incentives. Through the writings and social activism of the Bulgarian modernists, the sphere of culture and art became relatively independent from the political sphere, gaining value on its own as a sphere under the control of the artistic intelligentsia. In this respect, the modernist project in Bulgaria confirms Hutchinson's observation that cultural nationalists act as mediators, "who 'returning' to an imagined past in circumstances of confusion," engaged in "a project of self-discovery and collective definition that may lead them to experiment with several alternative visions of the nation over an extended period" (1999, 397).

The conglomerate of individual approaches to the Bulgarian nation during the modernist period suggests that the intellectuals, who sought Bulgarian society's modernization and Europeanization, worked in fact for the revival of the most ancient and indigenous roots of the Bulgarian way of life. Where they could not find it in the essentialized and officially canonized folk culture, they invented it, trying to bridge the gaps in the continuity of the Bulgarian nation's cultural development. Slaveikov was probably the most active of all Bulgarian modernists in producing novel collective identities from "embedded cultural assumptions" (cf. Hutchinson 1999, 397), a feature that Hutchinson closely relates with the workings of cultural nationalism. Again, similar to the Ukrainian modernists, their Bulgarian fellow ideologues saw tradition as a "modality for innovation" (cf. Jusdanis 2001, 37), seeking the realignment of their cultural heritage with modern, worldly intellectual advancements. Unlike Ukrainian modernist critics, however, Bulgarian intellectuals did not articulate a radically critical position *vis-à-vis* vernacular culture. They extolled it as a cherished tradition that served to inscribe the Bulgarian nation within the European milieu. This strategy, as Hutchinson has pointed out, is a common technique used by intellectuals in marginal European nations (Irish, Finnish, Serbian, etc.) to affirm their exclusivity and originality as ancient and rich European cultures.

Through experimentation with Bulgarian folklore, its transformation and adaptation to accommodate modern ideas, and simultaneous preservation of some aspects of the native form, the modernists initiated a dialogue with the world. At the same time, they revisited their national past, and realigned it with the present, eradicating with a single semantic gesture the strong self-colonizing implications of the traditional model of Bulgarian self-identification. The sober approach of the Bulgarian modernists to their native traditional culture (or to put it in Sloterdjik's terms, cynicism), which was expressed in their individual re-workings of the inherited traditional symbols, themes, motifs, and so on, assisted them in promoting their view of Bulgarianness. This concept was defined in relation to the ideals of individualism, spiritual aristocratism, and civil responsibility. The Bulgarian modernists aspired to enforce the homogenization of cultural space and to disseminate a form of national identity that elevated the experience of the Bulgarian nationality. They formulated the nation as a spiritual and moral principle embodied in Bulgarian high national culture, the only institution of signification that the modernists conceived as capable of expressing the national mind and historically rooted way of life. The modernists agitated for the creation of highly sophisticated individuals, well-versed in both their native culture and the intellectual treasures of the world (Europe), who could make informed choices regarding the realities of their national existence and actively could participate in the building of Bulgarian modern civil and cultured community. In this sense, the Bulgarian modernist movement developed as a communitarian project that pursued the unification of Bulgarians on the basis of one's willful choice to contribute to the advancement and unification of national society through one's individual creative energy.

The distinction the Bulgarian modernists made between culture and state—a boundary they persistently articulated as mandatory in their interactions with ruling governments—suggests that they acknowledged that the nation was founded on a "strong sense of history," stimulating the incessant reinvention of the historically rooted way of life, "a living tradition which is continually recreated to meet the needs and perspectives of each generation" rather than on the administratively imposed "legal uniformity" (cf. Hutchinson 1999, 399). As Hutchinson stresses, and the Bulgarian modernists firmly believed this, "because a national way of life is a spontaneous outgrowth of different individuals and groups, it cannot be constructed like a state from above; it can only be nourished from below" (cf. 1999, 400). Thus, unlike the Ukrainian modernists, who imagined the nation as an abstract and purely aesthetic realm (e.g., Sriblians'kyi's articulation of Ukraine), their Bulgarian counterparts created concrete images of the 'homeland,' a place geographically situated within particular territorial boundaries (San-Stefano, or Great Bulgaria; Slaveikov 1959, 313). Thus, they saw the nation as an abstract community "being bound by particular conceptions of space, time, and embodiment" (James 1996, 35), i.e., a *rodina* that did not coincide with the political unit, that is, the Bulgarian nation-state.

Bulgarian modernists established and maintained the distinction between nation and state, because they experienced the political incompleteness of the

Bulgarian *ethnos* as a tragedy. By means of equating the nation with the high culture they aspired to create, the modernists in Bulgaria reacted to the aggressive and politically unsound solutions proposed by the state to the national question. Imagining an ethnic Bulgarian community, unified through its high culture, they also aspired to provide those principles of national identification that would remedy the failure of the state to integrate all Bulgarians into a single national territory. In this sense, Bulgarian Modernism was a movement that offered a cure for the negative experience of the nation as fragmented and incomplete. The modernists sought to articulate Bulgarianness as a moral and spiritual principle that could sustain their efforts in achieving national integration regardless of territorial boundaries and historical discontinuity, thus encouraging the discovery and expression of the timeless and harmonious Bulgarian existence.

Hutchinson's conclusions are useful for interpreting Bulgarian Modernism as a distinctive form of cultural nationalism. This scholar maintains that the goal of cultural nationalists is to "modernize traditions so as to restore the nation to its former status in the vanguard of human progress. Their evolutionary historical vision claims to present an innovative solution that will reconcile the interests of traditionalists and modernists, thereby redirecting energies away from destructive conflict into a cooperative reconstruction of the national community" (1999, 402-403). The bulk of Bulgarian modernist discourses analyzed in this study shows that the desire to unite and integrate for the modernists in Bulgaria was very strong. They viewed themselves as the missing social agency to accomplish the well-balanced transition from colonial to post-colonial cultural and political existence. Proving the longevity and richness of the Bulgarian tradition, they worked to establish the status of Bulgarian national culture as a modern European culture capable of carrying the ethnic claims for Bulgarian uniqueness into the highly competitive modern world of political nations. Thus they also demonstrated that Bulgarian political independence was timely and well deserved.

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